Ties That Bind by beautiful_blue

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Characters: Ben Hanscom, Beverly Marsh, Bill Denbrough, Dustin Henderson, Eddie Kaspbrak, Eleven | Jane Hopper, Georgie Denbrough, Greta Keene, Henry Bowers, Holly Wheeler, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Lucas Sinclair, Maggie Tozier, Mike Hanlon, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Patrick Hockstetter, Reginald "Belch" Huggins, Richie Tozier, Stanley Uris, Steve Harrington, Victor Criss, Wentworth Tozier, Will Byers
Relationships: Bill Denbrough/Eddie Kaspbrak, Eleven | Jane Hopper & Mike Wheeler, Joyce Byers/Jim "Chief" Hopper, Steve Harrington/Nancy Wheeler, Will Byers/Richie Tozier, max mayfield/ lucas sinclair, stanley uris/ mike hanlon
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Summary:

Tired of the cruelty and unfairness of the world, Captain Richie Tozier's quest to change the world starts with attacking slaver ships on their way to his home country. The pirate captain manages to rescue three slaves set for trade in Valora Kingdom. Among the three slaves, Richie finds one in particular named Will Byers who seems to cling to slavery despite the fact Richie has freed him. Can Richie show Will the way life should be and get him to join in on his mission to change the world? Or is Will forever going to live in the mindset of a slave?

This is a Stranger Things & It crossover fic, but most of all it is a Ryers fic for those who don't know!

1. Slave Ships

Author's Note:

- For Shadowhunter4.

> Welcome to a new adventure, this time, at sea! I hope you all enjoy this, I have had fun writing it! Please let me know what you think in the comments!
>
> Just a heads up! I was told just after I uploaded there is a Reddie fanfiction that is of almost the same name. I wasn't aware of its existence when I named this one, but they're nothing alike and have no relation. I haven't even read it so I have no idea what its about, but if you're into Reddie, get out there and find it! THANKS!

Chapter 1

The pirate crew aboard the ship known as ‘The Raveness’ made a point of sailing as quickly as they could towards the slaver ship the moment they spotted it in the distance. They weren’t hard to spot as they had vibrant blue sails, and plenty of gold adorning their ships. The gold of course had been acquired by the successful capture and sale of slaves that the island of Pavlovia was best known for.

Captain Richard Tozier had done his research as to when the ships were heading from Pavlovia to his home land of Valora Kingdom. He was proud to say his research had paid off. Beverly and Max worked the canons, shooting various holes into the expensive wood along the side of the slave ship.

Once they were close enough, Mike Hanlon, and Ben Hanscom threw the plank across so Richie and his cousin, Mike Wheeler could venture across. The men on the ship were trained for combat, but they weren’t a match for Richie’s crew. Mike Hanlon tossed several men overboard easily while Ben seemed most interested in knocking men out with his club.

Bill Denbrough and Georgie Denbrough fought their way through the ship quickly with their swords. Georgie's hooked hand came in handy when it came to disarming soldiers aboard the ship. By the time their were only three soldiers left, they decided to surrender the ship, begging for their lives.

"Where are you assholes keeping your slaves?" Richie asked holding a sword to large neck of the most talkative crew member on the slave ship.

"Below deck, in cages." The man explained, swallowing nervously as his blue eyes looked over Richie's dark obsidian orbs.

"Hanlon, Hanscom… go get our new guests." Richie ordered, not removing his eyes from the man before him, "You know slavery is a really risky business these days. With people like me at sea, you definitely won't be staying in business. I want you to tell that to your leader. If he keeps sending slave ships with precious cargo, he's going to lose a lot of gold." Richie said before pulling back his sword, pointing a finger towards the small row boat on the side of the ship, "Take that boat, and deliver my message. Make sparing your life worthwhile for me." Richie said watching as the remaining three men made a run for the row boat.

Richie smirked as his cousin stood next to him, "You're really letting them go?" Mike asked.

Although they were often mistaken for twins, the two cousins dressed very differently. Richie's dark curls were only obscured by a black tricorn hat to keep the sun off his pale skin, a gold earring glistening in the sunlight, while Mike simply let his hair flow freely in the wind, free of ear piercings. Richie wore black leather pants, under a blue-grey frilled shirt and a red sash around his waist. Several thin gold chains hung from Richie's neck, many of which he'd pull off and sell to merchants on land. Two large coal coloured boots were pulled on up to his mid calf. Richie's fingers were adorned with several rings he'd stolen from his victims at sea; these too he often sold on land as they had no sentimental value. Mike wore a loose white shirt under a dark brown vest. His legs were covered by black pants, and chestnut coloured boots. While Richie always looked more dressed up, Mike always made a point to look modest.

“Why not? It’s only three, and they’ll get my message across.” Richie said as the men got the boat into the water before jumping into it.

“It will definitely get your message across, but what if they come looking for us?” Mike asked cautiously.

“They won’t. They aren’t an army, they’re just slavers.” Richie explained, “Even if they did come after us, I don’t doubt the ability of my crew, or their will to win this war.”

Mike put his sword back onto his belt, “If you say so.”

Georgie Denbrough grabbed up what he could, hauling as many goods as he could onto their ship with a pleased smile on his face. “Mike, why don’t you grab something that looks either expensive or useful and bring it to the ship. I plan to set this thing on fire before we abandon it.” Richie smirked at his cousin.

Mike smiled a little, and headed off to seek out what ever treasures there may be on the ship. Richie picked up a large casket of wine, hauling it to the ship. Once the casket was placed aboard the ship, Richie turned back to see Mike Hanlon, and Ben Hanscom leading three very beautiful, and scantily clad men onto the ship, “Welcome to the first taste of freedom you’ve had since your capture.” Richie smiled at them.

The shortest of the three was a brunette with shaggy curls, deep brown eyes, and many freckles covering his body. The tallest of them all was a man with golden blonde locks that looked to be well taken care of. His amber eyes scanned Richie suspiciously as he held his arms crossed before him. The final of the three had beautiful brown eyes rimmed with a lush forest green colour. He stood attentively, his dark blonde hair pulled back into a ponytail; it didn’t look like it had been cut in years. The men were wearing nothing but loin clothes, and thick brown collars around their necks. Their wrists had red marks where they had previously been wearing shackles. It was clear Ben and Mike had freed them from the shackles below deck.

“You’re seriously trying to convince us that you’re setting us free? Be honest, what are your plans for us.” The tall blonde spoke first, clearly not in the mood for lies.

“You have a choice, you may stay aboard the ship and work as a crew member, or you can leave any time, and start new lives on land. I’m not a slaver, in fact I’m quite the opposite of that.” Richie informed them, “Could I get your names?”

The blonde who spoke first didn’t look convinced, but he responded, “Stanley Uris.”

Richie pointed at the shortest, more freckled man, “Edward Kaspbrak… I prefer Eddie.” The man said looking hopeful that Richie wasn’t lying, that they were truly free.

Richie turned to the final man who bowed before him, “My name is Will Byers. How may I serve you master?”

Will’s reaction to him surprised him the most, “You don’t have to bow. I’m also not your master, you’re free now to make your own decisions.” Richie informed him.

“My apologies, sir.” Will said quickly, looking a bit lost as he didn’t know what was expected of him.

Richie eyed him for a moment before looking to the others who were staring at Will as if he was out of his mind entirely. “Do you three know what you’d like to do now that you’re free?” Richie asked.

“I have no where to go. I guess I’m stuck here?” Eddie spoke up.

“It’s not the worst place to be ‘stuck’ you know?” Richie smirked at him.

“I also have no where to go. I’ll be staying here for now.” Stan nodded in agreement.

“Alright, what about you?” Richie turned to Will who still looked lost.

“What do you think I should do, master?” Will asked his eyes big, and inquisitive.

“Uh… ok.” Richie cleared his throat, “You aren’t being tricked, you’re free. You don’t have to call me master. Also, it’s entirely your

decision what you do. What did you want to do?"

Will looked around as if expecting Stan or Eddie to have the correct answer, "I…" He looked to Richie, "I wish to serve you."

"He's a lost cause. He's been raised on Pavlovia since childhood." Stan explained quickly.

This told Richie a lot. Children and babies that were raised on Pavlovia Island all became brainwashed into their roles as servants. Richie didn't know much about their raising, but he could only guess it was intense training that broke their minds and spirits. It made him feel bad for Will, clearly, he couldn't think for himself anymore.

"How about you be my cabin boy? You can run errands for me, and deliver messages to crewmates for me?" Richie decided it was a good temporary solution.

"Yes master." Will bowed again.

Richie was about to correct Will, but he decided the day was already quite trying for the young man. Turning his attention to Stan and Eddie, he decided he might get better answers from them. "What sort of things are you two good at?"

"I… I can read the stars." Stan said, "I could navigate for you."

"You can read the stars?" Richie nodded, "Impressive. You see that dark-skinned man that freed you? He's the one who steers the ship, talk to him, and he'll find a task for you."

Stan nodded his head, "I just have one question."

"Yes?" Richie asked curiously.

Stan looked down at himself, "Is there anything else I can wear?"

Richie smiled a little, "Ask around, see if anyone has anything they can spare. If not, don't worry, we're docking very soon for supplies. I'll buy you something."

Stan nodded before removing his leather collar, heading over to Mike

who was working on steering the ship. Eddie followed suit, removing the uncomfortable looking collar. Once he dropped it on the deck floor, Eddie looked at Richie, “I know I’m not very strong or anything, but, my father was a doctor, and I know quite a bit from him. Maybe I could help some people on your ship that need medical attention?” Eddie spoke quickly.

Richie looked impressed, “That’s really good news. Georgie could use someone to help him with his wrist pain.”

“Georgie?” Eddie questioned looking around.

“He’s the boy with the hook on his hand, can't miss him. His older brother Bill can probably be of better assistance.” Richie nodded to Bill Denbrough who was adjusting the sails.

“Alright. I’ll talk to Bill.” Eddie nodded heading over to the auburn man.

Richie was left with the awkward slave boy who hadn’t bothered to remove his collar, “You can take that off, you know?” Richie pointed at the leather collar.

Will looked at him, “Oh, I don’t mind. I’ve always worn one.” He said quickly, “This will ensure people know I’m your servant.” He added.

“You’re not my servant. You’re my cabin boy.” Richie reminded him.

“What’s the difference if I may ask?” Will asked politely, his confusion was endearing, and rather cute in Richie’s opinion.

“Well, you don’t serve me, you just pull your weight to earn your keep here. We all work together to ensure the ship runs properly.” Richie tried to explain.

“What sort of tasks aside from running errands did you wish of me? I’m trained in many things.” Will started almost excitedly, “I can clean your clothing, help you bathe, I could massage you, and help keep you entertained at night.”

“No, no, no, you’re not required to do that… the cleaning sounds alright, but everything else, don’t worry about it.” Richie said

quickly, trying to keep his eyes off the beautiful man before him as his cheeks flushed momentarily.

“If you’re certain. I could… pour you wine?” Will suggested instead, feeling uneasy as he had made his new master uncomfortable multiple times in their first meeting together.

“Great, I could always use more reasons to be lazy.” Richie was just relieved it was something nonsexual he was offering.

Will smiled, feeling relieved. “What would you like me to do first, master?”

“Richie.” Richie corrected.

“Yes, of course. My apologies.” Will bowed his head again, clearly out of habit.

It was going to be a long journey back to the mainland, Richie could already tell. Stepping closer, Richie reached behind Will’s neck, and began undoing the collar. He took it off the blonde before him, allowing it to land at their feet. “Does that feel better?” Richie asked him.

Will gently reached up, rubbing the skin on his neck. It felt strange to him, he wasn’t used to there being nothing there. “I… This is…” Will looked down and then up at Richie, “You are very kind, Richie.” Will didn’t know what freedom was, that much was clear to Richie.

“Tell that to my cousin, he thinks I’m an asshole.” Richie smirked a little.

“Of course, where is your cousin?” Will immediately straightened up.

“No, I didn’t mean that literally…” Richie couldn’t help but let out a laugh, “Why don’t I show you around the ship?” Richie asked, placing a hand on Will’s shoulder as he started to walk with him below deck.

“That sounds wonderful.” Will nodded, following Richie’s lead.

2. The Road to Paradise Shackled in Chains

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie learns a little bit more about why Will is such an obedient slave despite the fact he is a free man.

Chapter 2

Richie was busy writing down inventory from the sunken slave ship they had set ablaze earlier when a knock at the door sounded. “Come in!” Richie called out from his cabin.

Mike Wheeler opened the door, gently pushing Will into the cabin, “This is for you.”

Richie looked up at Mike who looked a bit distressed, “What’s the matter?”

“He followed me around for about twenty minutes, asking me what else I wished him to do. To top it off, he called me master, which just feels wrong considering our mission.” Mike explained.

Looking to Will, he seemed to be stunned, looking from one cousin to the other, “B-But… you two look…”

“I know, we’re cousins.” Richie explained.

“You both remind me of my friends Pablo and Lazlo. They were identical twins though.” Will still looked to be in awe, trying to make a mental note of their differences.

“Oh yeah? You had some friends in Pavlovia?” Mike furrowed his brows looking surprised to hear that.

“Well I did. They were sold to a sultan as sex slaves. Identical twins are very popular in the sex trade, also very rare to find.” Will explained.

Mike nodded his head at the grim end to the story, “I think we’re done here.” Mike said before heading out of the cabin, closing the

door behind him.

Will watched him go before looking to Richie, “Did I do something wrong?” He looked worried, his eyes a bit wide.

Richie shook his head, “No, don’t worry about it. Come sit down.” Richie pulled out another chair attached to the table he was at.

Will sat down, looking as if he was restless. Richie finished up his inventory list before closing the leather-bound book, putting it aside before capping his ink bottle. Will looked at him expectantly, “So, Will. Tell me about yourself.” Richie looked at him curiously.

“What did you wish to know?” Will asked.

“How long have you been in Pavlovia?” Richie asked.

“As long as I can remember. I was taken from my family during a raid on West Shire Island when I was three.” Will said a little too casually for Richie’s liking.

“West Shire Island… that place was burnt to the ground for the most part. There’s still people there, but it’s a very poor island now.” Richie furrowed his brows, “You were taken from your family, I’m really sorry to hear that.”

“Don’t be. I have led a rewarding life.” Will said calmly.

Richie eyed him, “You can’t honestly believe that… You were enslaved.”

Will smiled gently, “Yes, but in a way, it’s like being chosen. So long as I live selflessly, and give my everything to my master, I will spend the afterlife in paradise.” Will explained looking pleased at the thought of his afterlife.

Richie was more and more disturbed by each word that left Will’s mouth, “That’s… that’s what they teach you in slave school?”

Will looked at him, “Yes, I’ve always been told that my hard work will pay off. I’ve always worked extra hard just to ensure I am given the happiest afterlife possible.”

“Will, they lied to you.” Richie said suddenly, watching Will’s face drop.

“What?” Will looked confused, and worried.

“They just wanted you to be compliant, so they raised you up to think there’s some wonderful reward for being a slave after you die. There isn’t. It wouldn’t make any sense.” Richie raised a brow.

“I… but…” Will fidgeted looking quite worried suddenly, “Have I angered you, master? Is that why you say such things?”

Richie shook his head, “I’m not trying to be mean, Will. I’m trying to be honest. What bothers me the most is how little it concerns you that you were stolen from your family. Don’t you miss them at all? Don’t you wish you could have known them better?”

Will looked at the table, a slightly hurt expression on his face, “I’ve never really thought about that…”

Richie looked at him sadly, “I’m really sorry about everything that’s happened to you. I’m even more sorry that you can’t see how messed up everything is.” Richie gently rubbed Will’s bare arm, “You were taken unrightfully from your family, and then you were made to believe that you aren’t a human being, just a slave. That’s something that should have never happened. I want to help you, I can imagine this is really hard for you to understand.”

Will looked at him sadly for a moment before his face went back to normal composure, “Is there anything you wish me to do?” Will asked after a moment.

It seemed as though the information was too much to take all at once. Richie sighed, deciding to let it go. “Why don’t you go lie down? You must be tired.” Richie nodded towards his large queen sized bed.

Will got up obediently before lying down on the floor at the foot of the bed. Richie sighed, rolling his eyes, “On the bed, genius.”

“Master, that’s your bed.” Will said quietly, “Are you certain you wish for me to sleep there?”

“It’s fine. I’ll share with Ben until we can get you something of your own to sleep on.

Will got up off the floor, and immediately bowed to him, “Master, I’m really sorry I’m making such a dishonourable first impression. I’m really truly trying, I think I will just need time to understand what you need. Also, you don’t have to share with Ben, I can sleep quietly beside you if you desire your own bed.”

“I’m not your master, first off. Secondly, you’re fine. I’m just frustrated, because I don’t know how to undo what ever it is they’ve done with your brain to make you think you’re a slave even when I’ve set you free.” Richie rubbed his temples before he stood up, pulling the blankets back before reaching a hand out to Will. “I suppose you are quite tiny, we can both fit in there without having to touch.” Richie stood up, walking over to one side of the bed. “Come on. It’s comfortable.” Richie coaxed him over rather easily.

Will carefully climbed onto the bed, his body relaxing as he sunk into the mattress below him, “Oh…” He relaxed, “Mast- Richie, this is really nice…” Will caught himself as he closed his eyes, nuzzling into the pillow cutely as Richie covered him in blankets, smiling slightly.

Richie pulled off his boots, and took off his hat, letting it sit on his dresser. He undid his leather pants but didn’t dare take them off. Will was already fast asleep next to him when Richie finally climbed into the bed. His face looked to be at peace, which was a nice sight to behold. Richie felt bad for Will, he was so brainwashed, he didn’t really know what was real, and what was fiction. He was so used to taking orders, he didn’t know how to do anything on his own. Richie wanted to fix that as best as he could, but it would take some time.

Closing his eyes, Richie let himself lie on his back. It didn’t take long at all for sleep to find him as well. The sounds of breathing beside him lulled him deeper to sleep. He felt oddly relaxed with Will lying beside him.

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Beverly and Max sat together in the dining hall. The table they all ate from took up much of the room. It was built for a crew of around

fifteen to twenty men, but they were barely ten crew members and that was after taking in three new people.

Max's long red hair was pulled back into a braid that ran down her back while Beverly's red hair was cut short. The two often spent their time together as they were both gunners on the ship. They had history together, a history that very few people aboard knew aside from Richie, Ben and Bill. "Good morning beauties." Richie smiled at them as he sat down at the end of the table where he usually sat.

"How was your night with the slave boy?" Max asked tauntingly.

"How did I know someone was going to bring that up?" Richie asked.

"Give us the details." Beverly grinned before biting into a piece of nut bread Georgie had made for them.

"I went to sleep. That's it. Believe me, if I had fucked him, you all would have heard it." Richie said placing some fruit and meat on his plate for breakfast, "Slaves can really sleep a long time, Will was still sleeping next to me when I woke up."

"He's a really beautiful one, he would probably cost a ton of gold at an auction. He's lucky we saved him." Beverly said before popping a grape into her mouth.

"How are the other two adjusting?" Richie asked curiously.

"They seem to be doing well. I saw Georgie getting his wrist looked at by Eddie. He's been really gentle with Georgie. I think he feels comfortable showing it to Eddie for examination. He never lets anyone else take a look at it without putting up a fight." Max said looking up at Richie.

"That's good to hear. He's an asset to the crew that's for sure." Richie smiled as he cut up his meat.

"That other new guy was swabbing the deck this morning… he looked pretty pissed off at it too. Something tells me he likes everything to be clean and tidy." Max shook her head at him, "So strange."

Richie chuckled a bit, “Well if that’s what he’s into, let him clean.”

Both of the Mike’s walked into the dining hall followed by Ben and shortly after Bill and Georgie who was carrying a plate of freshly made eggs for everyone. They all greeted each other happily before the former slaves came into the dining hall for something to eat. Eddie sat beside Georgie, and Richie spotted Bill Denbrough staring at him several times. With a small smile, Richie knew exactly what was going through his mind. Eddie was something to look at, even in the oversized clothing Ben Hanscom had leant him.

Will was the very last person to enter the dining hall. He was the only one still wearing just a loin cloth. Richie looked at him, “Sleeping Beauty has finally arrived.” Richie said earning a few chuckles from his fellow crewmates.

Will smiled at Richie, sitting in the free chair closest to Richie. “Good morning, ma- Richie.” Will corrected himself.

“You slept pretty good last night. Was the bed comfortable?” Richie asked.

“So very comfortable. Thank you.” Will smiled placing a single apple on his plate.

Richie eyed his plate, “You’re eating more than that aren’t you?”

“I can have more?” Will looked at him curiously.

“Yes, you can have as much as you want, but it’s first come first serve. So, if you ever come to breakfast too late, you can only take what’s left.” Richie said before taking a bite of his meat.

Will looked at the food for a moment before slowly reaching out to take a piece of bread, and a small piece of meat. He looked around as if someone was going to beat him if they noticed how much he was eating.

“It’s ok, you can eat it.” Richie assured him, “You’re a free man now.”

Will still didn’t seem to have a concept of what freedom meant, but Richie was determined to show him, no matter how long it took for it

to sink in. “We’re going to be arriving in Jetta soon. We’ll be able to stock up on supplies.” Mike Hanlon announced.

“Then I can get some new clothes?” Stanley asked as he picked at a piece of bread; he was lucky enough to be wearing some spare clothes from Bill Denbrough’s wardrobe.

“You mean you don’t want to wear that loin cloth all the time?” Mike Hanlon teased him.

Stan’s mouth twitched into a smile, but he quickly put bread in his mouth to hide it. “No.”

Will glanced at Richie several times, looking a bit perplexed, but he said nothing, eating a slice of his apple quietly. Richie decided he’d better ask, “What’s on your mind, Will?”

“Who’s Zachary?” Will questioned curiously.

Richie paused before looking at Will, “Where did you hear that name?”

Will shrugged, “You were saying it in your sleep at one point.” The entire table went silent, and even the new members of the crew could sense a growing tension in the room.

“Forget I said it.” Richie said quickly.

Will didn’t argue, he sensed he touched on something that was meant to be private. He ate without saying another word, glancing over every few minutes to she an uncomfortable look on Richie’s face. After several minutes, Richie got up, “I’ll be in my cabin if anyone needs me. Let me know when we reach Jetta.” Richie said before exiting the dining hall.

Notes for the Chapter:

Leave your thoughts with me! It feeds my soul :D

3. Hot Water

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie takes Will shopping in a market, and the two learn a lot about each other.

Chapter 3

After trading the various items stolen from the slaver ship, the members of 'The Raveness' were even richer than before. Richie informed the crew they could spend a little extra on something they liked for a job well done on completely sinking the slaver ship.

Will followed Richie around, very interested in the new scenery. It was clear Will had never been to a market place. He watched closely, paying attention to how everything seemed to work. Richie took Will to a tailor once they came across one. "Ready for some new clothes?" Richie asked him.

"If it pleases you." Will said simply.

"Wouldn't it please you to wear something other than a loin cloth?" Richie asked curiously.

Will looked down at it before looking thoughtful. While it was easy for anyone else to answer, Will had always been raised to have no opinions. To muster one was difficult as he assessed his situation. He looked at Richie and finally nodded. Progress, Richie thought. "Alright, let's see if we can find something in your size that feels good." Richie said.

After about half an hour of trying on different things, Will and Richie walked out of the tailors with an actual outfit for Will to wear. The white shirt he wore on top was loose and flowing. It looked good on him, and it was breezy enough not to get too hot in. He wore dark brown pants beneath the shirt, and some dark boots that were newly made. Richie looked over at Will as they walked, "How does it feel wearing that outfit?"

“I feel… like I’m not me anymore…” Will said slowly, as he attempted to comprehend what he was feeling.

“You’re still you, but you’re a free you.” Richie explained to him as they walked.

“You traded a ring for this… are you sure you are alright with that?” Will looked a bit remorseful although he hadn’t done anything bad.

Richie smiled at him, “Do you know where I got that ring from?” Will shook his head, “I stole it. I took it off the corpse of a pirate who attacked my ship. I’m not going to miss that ring, I intended to trade it, I just wear everything I have in case I need to pay for something.” Richie explained.

“I see.” Will nodded looking relieved. After a moment, Will spoke up again, “I… I’m… sorry about this morning.” Will muttered avoiding eye contact, “I won’t say that name again.”

Richie looked at him gently, “You didn’t do anything wrong, Will. It’s alright.” Richie assured him, “I just… that’s a sensitive subject for me. I don’t like to talk about it.”

Will nodded, “I understand, I won’t say anything on the subject.”

“I appreciate that.” Richie nodded his head.

“I do have questions though… may I ask them?” Will asked, looking a bit nervous to be sating his curiosity.

Richie smiled, “What did you want to know?”

“Why are you a pirate?” Will asked curiously.

Richie looked into Will’s soft hazel eyes for a moment, “I want to make the world a better place.”

Will looked surprised, “Aren’t pirates supposed to do bad things? Like attack and kill others?”

“Most of them do I suppose.” Richie shrugged, “Not I.”

Will nodded, “How do you want to make the world better?” Will questioned.

“I want to change the rules, because a lot of them are wrong.” Richie said as he led Will through the crowded market place.

Will was about to question further when Richie decided to stop at another vendor. “A slave huh?” the older man behind the small table asked Richie as he eyed Will’s neck where his skin was extremely pale where the collar used to reside.

“He’s not anymore.” Richie said to him, glancing down at the fishing items he had on display.

“How much for him?” The man asked curiously.

Richie glared at the man, “He’s not a slave. He’s also not for sale.” Richie grabbed Will’s arm, “Come on, Will.”

It was a feeling like no other, having someone defend him, and declare he wasn’t a slave. Will was used to being poked and prodded at by people who visited Pavlovia in search of a new slave. With Richie holding his arm protectively, Will felt safe for the first time in his life.

“You’re very kind, Richie…” Will muttered as Richie led them over to another table in which someone was selling potpourri for baths.

“You didn’t deserve that.” Richie said over his shoulder before picking up a few scents that he liked, trading a small gold necklace for it.

Will took the items Richie bought into his arms, willing to carry the items for Richie to keep his hands free. Richie allowed him to carry the items as they weren’t heavy. “Was there anything you wanted, Will?”

“I… wouldn’t know what to look for.” Will said honestly.

“It’s alright, maybe next time, yeah?” Richie smiled warmly at him, making Will relax instantly at the sight of his smile.

“Mhmm.” Will nodded.

The rest of the crew made it back onto the ship together. They talked over everything they bought, and some of the interesting things they’d found. Richie got himself a bath started that evening, Will helped by bringing in warm buckets of water with him. “Did you want to bathe at all?” Richie asked Will.

“Thank you, Richie, but I’ll bathe another time.” Will said once the tub in Richie’s cabin was full of warm water, the scent of jasmine emitted from the tub.

Richie shrugged, “Suit yourself.” Richie began to undress, not caring if Will was in the room with him. It was likely Will had seen everything already on other men.

Will watched as Richie removed all of his clothing before stepping into the tub of warm water. “God, this is nice…” Richie relaxed one he was fully submerged.

Richie let himself rest against the back of the tub, “Have you ever had a warm bath before, Will?” Richie asked.

“No.” Will said from right next to him, nearly making Richie jump out of the tub in surprise.

“Sorry for scaring you.” Will giggled softly.

Richie smiled a little, “That’s ok. You’re just very fast, and quiet. A lot like a humming bird or something.”

Will giggled at the comparison. “Did you want me to help you wash?” Will gently ran his fingers through Richie’s dark curls.

Richie was far too relaxed to think it through, so he nodded, “Alright, but you’re not a slave. Got it?” Richie pointed at Will warningly.

Will smiled, “I understand.” Richie scooted forwards a little, allowing Will the ability to wash his hair under the water. Only his face was sticking out enough to breathe.

Moaning softly, he enjoyed the feeling of Will’s fingers in his hair,

and on his scalp. “Fuck… your fingers are amazing…” Richie spoke pleasantly.

Richie sat up after a bit, Will massaged his neck and shoulders next, turning Richie into a pile of mush. “Wow… oh my God… how is this so good?” Richie groaned softly, making Will feel like he was finally servicing him properly.

In his relaxed state, Richie felt Will moving around to the side of the tub, but he didn’t think much of it. The feeling of a soft hand wrapping around his penis pulled him from his relaxation instantly. Richie stood up immediately, soaking the floor. Looking down at Will, wide eyed as his erection began building from the short amount of contact, “What are you doing?” Richie asked as Will looked shocked at how fast he’d stood up.

“Did you not like my hand? I could use my mouth instead if you wish.” Will looked up at him, a sad look in his eyes as he thought he disappointed Richie.

Richie’s eyes widened a bit and he covered his penis with both hands as it erected the rest of the way at the thought of those plush lips wrapped around his erection. “N-No! You’re free! You’re not a slave! No bath time handjobs, ok?” Richie’s voice cracked a little.

Will looked disappointed in himself, “Ok…”

“Don’t be upset, Will. I shouldn’t have let you wash me in the first place, I didn’t think. You were just doing what you were trained to do, but put that behind you ok? You don’t ever have to touch anyone like that ever again, understand?” Richie tried to get it through to him despite the fact he was standing naked in a bathtub.

Richie carefully sat down in the tub, his erection now poking up above the water much to his embarrassment. “I can go if you want?” Will suggested, standing up with a boner of his own showing beneath his shorts.

“It’s ok, but… you might want to take care of that.” Richie pointed at his erection, deciding there was no point in pretending he didn’t notice it.

Will looked down, shaking his head, “I’m not allowed.”

“You’re free, Will. You’re allowed.” Richie reminded him.

Will clenched his eyes shut, shaking his head, “The last time I…” Will paused looking down, “… I was punished. I can’t…”

“So you never jerk off?” Richie stared at him wide eyed as Will shook his head, “Never?!”

“Never.” Will replied, still standing over him with a hard on.

“Well, what if I give you permission? Or… something? I don’t know, it’s not healthy to just not jerk off when you need to!” Richie was baffled by it.

“It’ll pass… it always does.” Will said softly.

Just when Richie thought he couldn’t feel worse for Will, he was proven wrong. Getting out of the tub and draining it, Richie pulled a clean towel around his hips, “Wait here, I’ll be right back, ok?” Richie said before leaving the cabin, not worried in the least about the fact he was just wearing a towel.

Will waited, taking a seat at the small table in the cabin. Richie returned with two large buckets of hot water, pouring them into the tub one after the other. Will watched curiously, “I could have refilled it with warm water for you, ma- Richie.”

Richie shook his head, “Nope, this is your bath.” Richie put in some of the lavender scented potpourri for Will.

“For me?” Will looked surprised by this, he’d only ever taken cool baths in the slave bath house.

“Yep, come on, take those clothes off, and I’ll be right back with another bucket of water… but please cover up so I don’t see anything.” Richie made it clear he wasn’t trying to be a pervert.

Will nodded, watching Richie go again. When Richie returned he brought in a final bucket of luke warm water to balance out the heat. Richie was pleased to see Will wrapped in a towel waist down.

“Alright, I’ll turn around, and you can get in the water.” Richie said turning so Will could get in the bath.

Will carefully climbed inside, resting his back against the wall of the tub. “Wow…” Will sighed, his muscles relaxing entirely.

Richie smiled turning around, “Nice, right?” Will nodded, sinking into the water up to his shoulders.

Will closed his eyes, feeling at peace. Richie came up behind him, gently washing his long blonde hair. His toes curled with pleasure, making Richie smile as he massaged his scalp gently. It had been a long time since he’d shared bath time with another person, but he felt it was important for Will to get pampered at least once in a while. Once Will’s hair was clean, Richie gently scooped water in his hands, pouring it over Will’s exposed shoulders.

“Richie…?” Will asked in a soft voice.

Looking down, Richie sensed a shift in Will’s mood, “Yes? What’s wrong?”

Will sniffled, “Am I dead?” His voice was numb sounding, but immediately Richie knew the blonde below him was crying.

“Oh, no you’re not dead. You’re ok, you’re not dead.” Richie assured him as Will turned to look at him, tears pouring from his beautiful hazel eyes, “Shh… it’s ok, Will. Why do you think you’re dead?” Richie looked at him sadly, part of him already knowing the answer.

Will wiped his eyes, “No one’s ever been nice to me before… you’re… so nice…” Will choked out a sob, causing Richie to lean in and pull Will into a warm embrace.

“I’m so sorry, Will. You’ve been through so much, but you didn’t deserve it… No human being should ever be made into a slave.” Richie said sternly.

Will held onto Richie, despite them both being naked, they were sharing a tender moment that was much needed on Will’s part. “Why… why are you so nice to slaves? Why do you free them?” Will asked before pressing his face back into Richie’s neck.

“I…” Richie swallowed slowly pulling back to look Will in the eye as he spoke, “I grew up with one being my best friend. He meant so much to me, and eventually, I fell in love with him…”

Will looked at him for a moment, his crying halted for the time being, “What happened to him?”

Richie sucked his lips in as he tried to find a way to tell Will without sending himself into a fit of tears, “My father found out that I was in love with him. Zachary was sent away to Stavros.”

“Where they do human sacrifices?” Will questioned.

Richie nodded, “He was sacrificed to the volcano on Stavros Island."

Will looked at him sadly for a moment, “Oh, Richie I’m so sorry…”

Biting back his tears, Richie looked at Will softly, “I tried to find him, but by the time I set sail out here… it was too late.”

“How… long ago did he die?” Will asked.

“About half a year ago…” Richie responded quietly.

Will hugged Richie warmly, his own sadness dying down as Richie’s over powered his thoughts. “Now you stop slave ships.” Will said in a final tone.

“Well, that’s the start of it… there’s a lot more I intend to do, I just need to build up my crew. Once I have enough allies, and enough power, I can make a difference.” Richie looked at Will with a soft smile, “I’m going to make this world right.”

“How?” Will asked.

“You’ll see.” Richie smiled, his teeth showing this time.

Somehow, Will believed in him. Richie could make a difference. There was just something about him that told Will everything was about to change in the world. He wanted to be part of it as well.

Notes for the Chapter:

How did you guys like this chapter? Please let me know!

4. Bards and Thieves

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie and his crew head to Mikos Island for some new crew-mates. Richie didn't expect to be pick-pocketed upon arrival.

Chapter 4

Heading from Jetta to Mikos was about a two-day journey. It was the perfect place to start looking for crew members as many of the people in Mikos were looking for a way out of the failing city as it's silver mine was no longer producing good trade.

Richie found himself sitting with his cousin in the dining hall. "Mike, have you ever been in love before?"

"I can't say that I have, no." Mike Wheeler shook his head as he picked apart a piece of cinnamon bread, shoving pieces of it in his mouth.

"I didn't think so…" Richie sighed.

"Why?" Mike asked him curiously.

"I just… I keep dreaming about Zachary. I keep seeing him at the edge of a volcano, and every time I try to save him, he gets pushed in, and I wake up." Richie sighed feeling saddened by the thought, "I really want to know what it means."

"I think it means you need closure. You've been beating yourself up over this for so long. Maybe we should take a trip to Stavros so you can say goodbye." Mike suggested

"No. I never want to set foot on that God forsaken island." Richie shook his head.

"Fine, don't take my advice." Mike said to him, not looking or sounding hurt as he spoke.

“Your advice is good, but I’m not ready to face that place knowing I was too late.” Richie sighed looking at the empty plate before him.

“Maybe you need to think about moving forwards with your life.” Mike suggested.

“Moving forwards how?” Richie questioned, his brows furrowed.

“Maybe you need to stop this mission that you’re on.” Mike suggested.

“You mean the mission that WE as an entire ship are on?” Richie looked at him annoyed.

“Look, I’m not saying the mission is bad, I’d be willing to carry it out for you, I just know you’ve been through a lot. Maybe you need to go back home, and just take some time to mourn.” Mike told his cousin.

“No.” Richie pointed at him, “I’m not leaving you in charge of a mission I created, and I’m certainly not going back to my father’s just to cry over the fact my father committed the ultimate betrayal. He did this to me, and if I go back there, he’ll have me marrying the Hell beast Greta Keene just as he originally intended.” Richie grimaced. “I’m staying, and we’re doing this.”

Mike looked at him seriously, “I had a feeling you’d say that. I just hope we can find enough people to make this whole thing work…”

“You knew what you were signing on for… are you getting cold feet?” Richie questioned.

“No… I really have nothing to live for. If my life is on the line, I’m not worried about it.” Mike admitted.

“You have nothing to live for? What are you talking about?” Richie furrowed his brows again, “You… don’t feel any reason to live?”

Mike said nothing for a moment, “It’s not that exactly… I just feel like there isn’t enough keeping me here sometimes. The world is a messed up place and you can’t even trust your parents to keep you safe sometimes. Don’t worry, I won’t be tossing myself overboard anytime soon.” Mike smiled.

Richie smiled back, “Good, because that’s my job to toss you overboard if I get sick of your complaining.”

The two laughed together for a bit before Richie looked over at Mike, “We’re going to change the rules, and we’re going to make it so your sisters never have to marry someone they don’t want to just to keep peace between families.” Richie promised.

There had been talk since before Zachary was taken from Richie that Nancy might have to marry a man known for cruelty just so Mike’s parents could reap the gold involved in such a transaction. Nancy was a beautiful woman, she had a lot of suitor options, but the fact that Ted was considering trading her off to a certain murderous Patrick Hockstetter, Mike was willing to rebel against their plans.

“If we have to, we’ll convince Nancy to join our ship.” Richie suggested.

“Pfft… I doubt you’d have an easy time convincing her.” Mike rolled his eyes, “She’s stubborn.”

“I’d rather jump on a boat with no oars than marry that monster. Hell, I’d start paddling with my hands.” Richie chuckled.

Mike nodded, “Agreed.”

***

Bill Denbrough and Mike Hanlon got the boat docked in Mikos as quickly as possible the following day. Everyone on the ship got off in search of new crewmates except for Georgie, and Ben who opted to stay behind and guard the ship.

Beverly and Max headed inside one of the taverns nearby, Richie decided to follow them, Will sticking close to him as per usual. There were many people drinking inside of the tavern, but there was a small set up against one of the walls in which a couple of bards were singing and playing their instruments.

Richie looked at Will, “Did you want anything to drink?”

Will shook his head, still not comfortable with the idea of receiving

nice things. A man with extremely curly brown hair bumped into Richie, “Oh, sorry.” He said quickly.
“It’s fine.” Richie said before turning back to Will, “Are you sure? You’ve never tried alcohol before have you?” Richie smiled before suddenly it faded as he reached for his coin purse only for it to be no longer dangling from his hip, “FUCK!” He said in Will’s face causing him to jump before he pulled out his sword, pointing it towards the curly haired man that bumped into him, “Hand it over, curly or I’ll have your head stuffed and mounted on my ship.” Richie threatened.

“What? The man turned around holding both hands up, his blue eyes then shooting towards something above and behind Richie, “What the Hell…?” He pointed with a finger before Richie and Will both looked back.

Upon realizing nothing was there, Richie turned back to see the man running off into the streets outside. “Fuck!” Richie shouted again before chasing after him followed by Max who was wielding a gun.

Richie and Max ran through the crowds of people. Richie whistled for his cousin Mike Wheeler, and Bill who were both nearby at a merchant’s booth. The two saw Richie running, and followed, spotting the culprit ahead of them.

The man weaved between sandstone buildings, trying to lose those pursuing him. Bill and Mike headed in different directions in an attempt to cut the man off. Max aimed her gun the moment there was a clear shot, she shot towards his head, but missed, only by an inch. “Damn it!” She screamed before continuing the pursuit.

Upon rounding a corner, Richie was nervous he’d lost the thief, but once he realized his cousin and Bill were pinning him against the wall, Richie sighed with relief.

“Thank God! The bastard took my coin purse!” Richie shouted.

“I didn’t! I swear! I was just running because I was scared!” the man looked at them with wide eyes.

Bill pulled out his sword, looking to the thief’s hand, “You know… my little brother Georgie lost his hand due to stealing. It devastated

him. I wonder what it would do to you." Bill held up his sword in a motion that looked about ready to cut off his hand.

"Oh shit! No! I'll give it back! I swear!" The man struggled in Mike's grip.

"Where is it?!" Max shouted at him, her gun pointed at his face.

"It's in my pants! Please don't shoot!" He begged nervously.

Bill reached into his pocket, and pulled out the coin purse, tossing it to Richie. "What the…" Bill furrowed his brows before reaching in, pulling out several more items of interest.

"Oh, come on! I need to eat somehow…" The man looked at Bill with sorrow in his eyes.

Richie was amazed at just how much he had stolen that day before Richie's crew caught him. "Great, now we can eat." Max taunted, "I can put you out of your misery if you prefer." Max aimed her gun at his face, watching his nervous expression with glee.

Something hit her in the hand, the blunt end of a dagger she noticed before dropping the gun to the ground. Looking over to the right, she spotted the two bards from the tavern. The darker skinned man was the one who had thrown the dagger, a look of intensity in his eyes, a red bandana tied to his forehead. The taller man slightly older than the two spoke up, his feathery hair majestic in the sunlight, "Let the shithead go." The man had a sword in his hand, looking ready to fight the crew.

"Steve, don't let them take my stuff! It was enough to feed us for a week!" The man shouted nervously.

Richie eyed the taller man, "Well, Steve… Give me a good reason why I shouldn't just kill him?"

"He'll let you keep what's in his pockets." Steve said confidently.

"Steve, we need it!" The curly haired man said desperately.

"We'll figure something out, Dustin, just calm down." Steve looked

over at him.

Richie put his sword away, a small smirk forming on his face, “You three are quite capable. I could really use some new crewmates.” Richie said to them.

“It’s gotta be a trap.” The dark-skinned man spoke finally.

“I’m aware, Lucas.” Steve said not tearing his eyes away from Richie.

“We aren’t seriously thinking of bringing them onto the ship! That guy almost took my hand off with his dagger.” Max looked at Richie with her fiery eyes.

“If I wanted to take your hand off, you wouldn’t have one.” Lucas said to her confidently.

Max leered at him. Richie grabbed hold of Dustin’s arm, as Mike let go of him. Richie took only his coin purse but put the other stolen items back in Dustin’s pocket before putting his sword back in it’s sheath. “Go then.” Richie nodded to Dustin, letting him go before looking to Steve, “My ship is called ‘The Raveness’ and she sets sail tomorrow morning at dawn. If you boys decide you want a more exciting life at sea, you come find my ship. If not, have a nice life stealing from people until someone inevitably kills you.” Richie said before nodding to his crew, heading towards the tavern where he left Will and Bev.

Steve put a hand on Dustin’s shoulder, looking over at Richie as they left. “I can’t believe you let them get away with that.” Max sounded disappointed.

“You’re just pissed because a boy caught you off guard.” Richie smirked at her as he held onto his coin purse rather than put it back in an unsafe location of his body.

The moment Richie returned to the tavern, he spotted Beverly and Will sitting at a table together. Will was staring into a wooden mug cautiously. Richie glanced into it, “Whatcha got there?”

“I bought him ale, but he’s afraid to drink it.” Beverly explained as she downed the rest of her mug.

Richie looked at Will, “Well? Are you going to drink it or not?” Richie asked him.

Will grimaced before slowly lifting the mug to his lips, taking a drink of it before making a sour face, shaking his head. Richie chuckled, taking the mug from him, “I suspect you might like wine better. Shall I get you a glass?” Richie asked Will.

“N-No, but thank you.” Will shifted uncomfortably.

Richie took a drink from the mug, making a face, “Yes… this really isn’t the best ale… we’ll find something good for you to drink instead sometime.”

“Is everything ok?” Will looked at Richie concerned, “Did you stop the people who stole from you?”

“Yes. They’ll be joining our crew.” Richie said casually.

“You don’t know that. They think we want to kill them, so they probably won’t show their faces around here until they know we’ve left.” Mike Wheeler shook his head.

“Oh, they’ll come around. I just know it.” Richie smirked confidently.

Richie took another drink of the ale, “Damn it, Beverly… is this moose piss or ale?”

“Moose piss. I felt it was better than what ever Will was drinking back on Pavlovia.” Beverly said in a deadpan expression.

“Figures.” Richie smirked draining the mug.

“We drank water and ate celery most meals.” Will explained.

“You were living in Hell… holy fuck…” Richie eyed Will for a moment.

“Be nice.” Beverly warned Richie as Will looked at the table top silently.

A girl in a skimpy dress, black curls, and a devious look in her eye

came over to the table. “Good day boys, any of you care to take a tumble?”

Mike and Bill shifted uncomfortably before shaking their heads at her. Richie looked at Will, nudging his arm, “You wanna pop that cherry, Will?” Richie teased.

Will looked confused, “What does that mean?”

“You wanna have sex with her?” Richie asked Will.

Will looked at Richie wide eyed, “What?”

“You heard me, do you want to stick your penis in her vagina?” Richie asked him, watching Will look confused.

Will looked at him, “Slaves aren’t allowed to have sex unless it’s what their master wishes. Did you… wish to watch me with her? I have been trained on women as well orally.” Richie went speechless as the imagery came to mind.

Beverly shook her head with a small smile directed at the woman, “We’re fine, thank you.” Beverly said to the woman who eyed them with an amused look before heading off.

“Wow, I’m pretty sure Will won that round.” Beverly said watching as Richie went a bit pink.

“Shut it, Marsh.” Richie spoke quickly.

Notes for the Chapter:

> How excited is everyone for these characters to be here finally?!

5. Drunk

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie's new crew-mates join the ship and Will gets drunk for the first time.

Chapter 5

The following morning. Bill and Eddie were practice sparring on the deck just as the sun started to rise. There was a sparkle in Eddie's eyes as he looked to be quite happy learning to defend himself. Richie watched from the shadows observantly as he drank from a bottle of red wine. Something told Richie the two had become much closer since Eddie began tending to Georgie's wrist. Richie had a feeling that the sparkle in Eddie's eyes also had something to do with the fact he was sparring with a shirtless Bill in particular. Even Richie enjoyed the view.

"Spying on our crew?" Mike Wheeler came up behind him, nearly sending Richie a few feet into the air.

"Fucking Hell, Mike. Don't scare me like that." Richie gripping his pounding heart.

Mike smiled ever so slightly, "Those two look pretty happy, don't they?"

"Yeah, I've never seen Bill so happy before." Richie commented.

"Are you sad to give up your 'fuck buddy' as you so eloquently call it?" Mike asked crossing his arms.

"Yeah, there was no feelings there, just some fun for the lonely nights. From what I've heard around the ship, Eddie stays with Bill in his cabin. He's not so lonely now, the lucky dog." Richie grinned and leaned his hip on the side of the ship as he watched Bill disarm Eddie who made a sound of protest.

"He's not the only one who has bedside company." Mike eyed him.

“Oh, you finally popped that cherry, Mike?” Richie teased watching Mike roll his eyes.

“I was talking about you, and your new cabin boy.” Mike said attempting to tease him back.

Richie scoffed, “We’re not like that. He’s got his own new bed now on the lower level as of yesterday, and for your information he stayed there all last night.”

“Fine, stay in denial.” Mike said before heading past Richie, “Before we set sale for Valora, I’m going down to the kitchen to see if Georgie needs a hand-” Mike paused for a moment, “Help.”

“Nice.” Richie commented watching Mike leave with embarrassment.

Richie smiled watching as Eddie and Bill continued to practice together. Once the sun came up, Richie was greeted by Steve, Lucas, and Dustin who had with them packed bags, and a hopeful look on their faces “Are you sure you want us to join your crew?” Steve asked Richie, both hands on his hips as he looked at him curiously.

“I could always use more help.” Richie said to him, “Before you make your decision, let me talk to you three. I’m not your average pirate.” Richie told them as Will stood next to him, ready to perform what ever tasks Richie required of him that day.

“What do you mean by that?” Steve looked a bit confused.

“I’m not out here just to kill and steal from people. I’m here with an actual mission.” Richie told them.

“What kind of mission?” Lucas asked eyeing him curiously.

“One that will hopefully change the way the world runs.” Richie said vaguely.

“Look, if you really want us to join your crew, you need to tell us what’s going on.” Dustin said to Richie seriously.

“I’m planning a take over. I’m going to take the three kingdoms once I have enough back up. I’m going to shut down the slave trade,

promote equality, and I'm going to implement democracy, and abolish monarchy." Richie explained calmly.

Will listened, curious as he didn't quite know the extent Richie's plans even after following him for so long. His plans were impressive, even if they seemed quite impossible to achieve. "Yeah, no. You're insane." Steve scoffed.

"I have a plan. It'll work, I just need enough followers." Richie explained.

"Well, good luck to you, but you're going to need an army to achieve those dreams." Steve scoffed.

"That's part of the plan." Richie nodded. "Are you willing to risk your lives doing something noble or would you rather die as poor thieves?" Richie questioned.

"It's a bad plan, ok? You have no idea what you're doing. Come on guys, let's go back home." Steve said turning towards the side of the ship.

Upon realizing the other two weren't following him, Steve looked back at them curiously, "What are you doing? I said let's go."

"Steve… I like his morals, even if they do seem hard to achieve." Dustin looked at Steve, "He's right though, we're probably going to die here in Mikos if we keep stealing… I don't want to go down that way. I'd rather fight." Dustin told him seriously.

Steve looked at Lucas next, "I'm with Dustin. I'd rather take a chance with this crew… at least they have food here… right?" Lucas eyed Richie.

"Plenty of food." Richie nodded, "We have a lot of gold, we're going to be fine. Come on Steve, at least travel with us a little. If you decide you aren't interested in what our plans are, then you can leave at any time." Richie offered.

Steve looked from his companions to Richie before sighing loudly, "Fine. We'll follow you for a little while, but I'm not ready for any suicide missions." Steve said sternly.

“No suicide missions are coming up, lucky for you. We’re heading back to Valora Kingdom once we are able to make it there.” Richie explained.

“You’re planning to take over a huge kingdom next up, and you don’t count that as a suicide mission?” Steve stared in shock.

“I’m not going there to take it over, I’m going there to stop a wedding from potentially happening.” Richie explained, “All we have to do is capture my cousins to keep them safe.”

“Oh, of course… nothing dangerous about that.” Steve sighed, “Fine, I’m with you.”

Richie smiled, nodding, “I’m glad to hear it. Now, if you three are any good at rigging, Bill Denbrough could use some help in that department so we’re more efficient. Talk to him, he’ll find you some work. Everyone pulls their weight on this ship. Lucky for you three, we just got some new beds in the lower cabins. Now go see Bill, we’ve got a ship to set on course.” Richie said heading off towards the wheel.

Will followed him, “Mas- I mean, Richie?” Will asked curiously.

“Yes?” Richie looked over his shoulder at Will.

“Wasn’t one of those beds meant to be mine?” Will asked curiously.

“I guess this just means you’ll have to share my bed for a little longer.” Richie said to him, watching a small blush spread across Will’s face, “Is that alright?”

Will nodded, “Of course, but what about Eddie, and Stan?”

Richie glanced up towards the steering wheel Mike Hanlon was about to be manning. Standing close by was Stan, his golden locks shimmering in the sunlight as they went over a map together. Richie watched them for a moment as they continued to stand a little closer than they needed to. “Hey Stan!” Richie called up to him, watching as Mike and Stan shuffled about a foot apart upon noticing they were being watched, “I’m giving your new bed to one of the new guys, is that going to be a problem or will you and Mike be content to share a

cabin bed a little longer?"

Stan looked between Mike and Richie before shrugging, "That's fine. I can stay where I am for now… until we can stop for another one of course."

"Of course." Richie smirked before looking to Will who began to follow him below the deck once more.

***

The dining hall was getting closer to full capacity, but even so, it still had some empty seats. "This is amazing, where did you learn to cook like this?" Dustin asked looking over at Georgie as he ate some almond bread.

Georgie smiled cutely, "Beverly taught me a lot of it. Bill taught me the rest."

"Bill taught you how to burn things, I taught you everything you needed to succeed." Beverly winked at Bill who laughed a little.

"She's not wrong." Bill said, before biting into a piece of steak they'd gotten at the Mikos market.

Richie poured himself a wooden goblet of wine before looking to Will questioningly, "You want to try some?"

Will looked over at him, swallowing a bite of carrot. "I don't think I should. Slaves aren't allowed to drink."

Richie raised a brow, "Are you my slave boy, or are you my cabin boy?" Richie asked him.

Will licked his lips before slowly taking the goblet in his hands, taking a drink. The taste of the fermented fruit coating his tongue sent a jolt through him. It tasted so good, like nothing he'd ever tried before. Richie smirked at him, "You like it?" Will nodded shyly, averting his eyes.

Richie said nothing but began pouring another goblet for Will to drink wine from. "Here."

Will looked a bit nervous, “Richie, I’m… not supposed to get drunk…”

“Says who?” Richie asked taking a drink from his own goblet.

Will looked down, “The people who trained me…”

Richie lifted Will’s chin with a finger, making Will look him in the eyes, “If I ever meet the people who ‘trained’ you, I’m going to rip them a new asshole. Forget what they taught you, you’re a free man now.” Richie reminded Will often he was free, but the damn brain washing made Will forget.

“Was he a slave?” Lucas asked Mike Wheeler curiously.

Nodding, Mike finished chewing his bread before he spoke, “He’s one of those Pavlovia slaves that was raised on the island. They messed him up pretty good.”

Will didn’t know why, but he was bothered by Mike Wheeler’s words. He didn’t want to be known as someone who was ‘messed up’ or ‘broken’ he just wanted to be known as someone who did a good job. He was raised to believe praise was something to live for. He felt instead like a freak. Getting up after only eating half of his food, Will headed out of the dining hall. The only people who seemed to notice he was leaving was Richie, Beverly, and Max. Richie popped a grape into his mouth, his hand on an unopened wine bottle as he chased after Will, following him onto the deck.

“Will? Are you going to finish your dinner?” Richie questioned as Will stared up at the stars above.

“Am I… broken?” Will asked softly.

Richie realized what had upset him instantly, “Oh, don’t listen to that. Mike was just trying to give Lucas some context as to why you’re so devoted to your training.”

Will looked back at Richie, turning to face him completely, “I don’t want to be ‘messed up’ I want to be good…” Will looked down, “I feel like I’ve been a disappointment since I came on this ship…”

Richie looked at him, “You’re not a disappointment Will. You’re a victim, yes, but you’re learning to be like the rest of us, and it’s not going to happen over night.” Richie reminded.

Will looked down, “There’s… rules I was supposed to follow, and I’m feeling bad every time I break one…”

“Like what? Drinking?” Richie asked placing a hand on his shoulder, “You shouldn’t feel bad about that.”

“Drinking… bathing like a master would… sleeping in a bed without performing sexual favours. You say I can touch myself, but I’ve been told all my life I can’t. It all feels so wrong… so… lazy of me.” Will looked around, “You said the other day about teaching me to use a sword, but I can’t. Slaves aren’t allowed to wield weapons. We’re not even allowed to protect our masters in a battle. We are simply docile.”

“It’s not easy breaking of all these things, but it’s important you try. I want you to feel how I feel. I want you to feel free. I want you to have a chance at a normal life, a simple life even. Perhaps one day you might fall in love with someone and have a family of your own. Those were things that were taken from you, and they shouldn’t have been.” Richie tried to persuade him.

“Even free, I wouldn’t have a family.” Will muttered softly, looking at his feet.

Richie looked at him for a moment, “Why not?”

“Women, I… don’t…” Will shuffled in his spot, struggling to speak, “I like…. Men.”

“So, you have a preference?” Richie smiled a little.

“I’m not supposed to though… I’m…” Will grabbed his head as it felt like it was spinning, “I was… a slave.”

Richie looked at him softly, “This is hard on you, I can tell every time you get close to feeling free, something pulls you back in.”

Will’s eyes were watery as he looked at Richie, “It’s so confusing…

when do I wake up and find out I'm still a slave?"

"Never, because you're not a slave." Richie assured him, "You're my cabin boy. You're going to be my cabin boy until you tire of it. Understand?" Will nodded his head, but didn't seem to be understanding it truly, "Do slaves have dreams? Wishes? Thoughts of their own?" Richie questioned.

Will nodded, "Yes… often we dream of paradise…"

"What's in paradise? What is paradise to you?" Richie looked him over.

Will calmed a bit at the thought, "Sleeping comfortably, bathing in warm water with flowers…" Will smiled a little, "Beautiful, soft animals. Beaches, and swimming all day long. Sunsets and sunrises. Delicious food. Being held in caring arms. Feeling…"

"Loved? Safe?" Richie asked.

Will nodded, his face falling a little, "It's silly."

"It's not silly. You're a person too. You deserve to be loved. You also deserve to be safe." Richie assured him.

"It's too late for those things… I'm broken, like your cousin says…" Will looked up at the sky again.

Richie held out the wine to Will. "I order you as my cabin boy to get drunk."

"What?" Will asked confused.

"Yeah, if you get drunk, then you won't have to worry about anything for the night. You can just drink and lay around in the cabin with me." Richie suggested.

"You'd let me do that?" Will asked, "I mean… of course you would… you're kind… it's so strange even after weeks of knowing you."

Richie smiled a little, "Come on, Cabin boy! Let's go!" Richie encouraged him to follow.

Will smiled a little, following Richie down below deck. They walked to his cabin, Richie closed the door behind them. Richie sat down the bottle of wine at the table, gesturing for Will to sit down; he obliged. Sitting across from him, Richie used both of his thumbs to pop open the wine bottle. Will was a bit impressed when the cork hit off the wall after mere seconds of trying. “There we go, now drink up.” Richie poured him some wine, pushing the cup over to Will.

Drinking it at a moderate pace, the two talked about their lives together, getting drunker progressively. Will couldn’t help his curiosity once he was about four cups of wine in, “Richie, what was Zachary like when you met him? Was he from Pavlovia?” Will looked at him with wonder.

“Zachary was from Pavlovia yes, but he wasn’t there for very long before he was bought by my father when we were both eight. Zachary was eager to work when I first met him. He did a good job, but he was mostly around for cleaning floors, and keeping me company when I went out to play in the woods. Father felt it best to have someone look after me, someone I’d look at as a friend. He taught me how to climb trees, and I taught him how to swim. It was really wonderful spending so much time with him.” Richie fondly, a distant look in his eyes before he looked to Will, “What about you? Have you ever liked anyone?”

Will shook his head, “No… not really.”

“What does that mean?” Richie smirked a little.

Will smiled a little, “I’ve found people attractive, but that’s all there is for me.”

“Was… that’s all there was.” Richie reminded before taking another drink of his wine realizing it was now an empty bottle, “You know, I’d be willing to help find you someone if you wanted that.” Richie suggested, “Maybe even someone just for a night of fun?”

“That’s n-not necessary, but thank you, Richie.” Will blushed and immediately Richie knew Will was at the very least intrigued by the idea as his pants became tighter.

“Have you been stealing bananas?” Richie nodded to his groin.

Will covered himself, “I’m sorry… I can’t help it…”

Richie chuckled a bit, “You ever going to take care of that thing?”

Will shook his head, “I can’t…” Will blushed looking down, a small smile playing on his lips thanks to the alcohol.

“Oh, yes you can. You’re my cabin boy, you’re allowed to jerk off any time you want to… well, within reason.” Richie decided.

“Richie…” Will looked at him before averting his eyes.

Richie grinned, “Come on, cabin boy. If you want to get past this whole slave non-sense, you gotta try touching yourself at least once. That’s how you really lay claim on your body.”

“I still have scars from the last time I did that… They beat me with a staff…” Will looked a bit upset at the memory of being beaten.

“Ok fine, I won’t force you, but just promise me that if you feel the urge, you’ll do it.” Richie eyed him for a moment.

“I… feel the urge now…” Will looked down embarrassed.

“Thinking of an attractive man, are we?” Richie teased him.

Will shook his head, smiling cutely, “No.”

Will went to stand up, but his ability to maintain balance led him to fall onto his side on the wooden floor. Richie started laughing before he stumbled over to Will, attempting to help him stand despite the fact that he was also very inebriated. Richie held onto Wills wrists, helping to pull him up to his feet. “What happened?” Will asked confused.

Richie laughed again, “You’re drunk, and you can’t use your legs properly.”

“You drank more than me! How are you still able to hold yourself up?” Will asked, feeling as though his legs were part jellified.

“I’m used to drinking, that’s why. This is nothing for me. Thank God we ran out of wine, or you might end up with a worse hangover tomorrow.” Richie said helping Will over to the bed. “Lie down if you’re feeling dizzy.” Richie told him.

Will obliged, lying on his back, staring up at the ceiling of the cabin, “Am I strange?” Will asked softly.

“Yes.” Richie responded quickly looking at him, “I like it though.”

Will smiled a little, his face flushed form the wine, “You’re strange, Richie… I like it a lot.” Will responded to him after a moment, “I consider you… my friend.” Will said slowly.

Richie smiled at him, “You’re my friend too. I’m glad you’re here.” Richie informed him as they lay on their backs together.

“Why does it feel like I’m flying when I close my eyes?” Will asked closing his eyes repeatedly.

Richie couldn’t help but laugh, “Maybe because you’re drunk, Will.” Richie reminded.

Will giggled a little, and it was a sweet sound filling the cabin, “I like it…”

“I’m glad to see you happy.” Richie admitted looking over at Will who was holding his arms in the air above him, enjoying the feeling of flying.

“I’ve never felt like this before… I don’t want it to end…” Will said, a smile still plastered on his face.

Richie watched him amused, “It doesn’t have to. You can drink with me any time you want to.”

Will nodded, looking over at him, “I like that. I just… hope I don’t throw up everywhere tomorrow morning.”

“No doubt you will, but I’ve got a bucket if you get sick. I promise I’ll take good care of you if you’re hung over tomorrow. I’m an excellent drinking buddy.” Richie smiled at him warmly.

Will's arms slowly landed above his head, something about it appeared graceful. "Richie… I'm sleepy…" Will told him.

Richie tugged the pillow Will used down a little lower, carefully lifting Will's head so he could rest on it. Will smiled, his eyes opening briefly to look at Richie with appreciation before they closed again. "Goodnight, Will. See you tomorrow." Richie said softly.

"Richie…" Will breathed, his eyes still closed.

"Yes?" Richie asked rolling on his side, facing Will as he pulled his pillow under his own head.

Will reached for Richie's hand, holding it gently, "You're the best friend I've ever had…" Will smiled softly, a tear slipping from his eyes before he seemed to drift off into a dream.

Richie felt a pang in his chest. He felt like he owed it to Will to have a good life from there on out. The boy was so sweet and fragile, it seemed wrong to offer him anything but happiness. He wanted to keep him protected for the time being, until he could find Will a safe place on land to live peacefully. "Sweet dreams…" Richie whispered before closing his eyes, drifting off to sleep with their hands still carefully clasped together.

Notes for the Chapter:

Leave your thoughts!

6. Wedding Crashers

Summary for the Chapter:

> Will wakes up with a killer hang over. Richie and the crew finally make it to Valora Kingdom.

Chapter 6

Will spent most of the following morning nursing a hang over. Richie had bundled him up in a blanket, leaving the puke bucket beside Will's side of the bed. Richie was fine the following day, and everyone seemed to be carrying on like usual in the dining hall. "So did you fuck him last night?" Beverly asked, leaning closer so only Richie could hear.

Richie scoffed, "No, I got him drunk out of his mind last night, though. He's got a hang over. Poor little lightweight." Richie smiled fondly as he made up a plate of food for Will, filling a mug of water for him.

"Aww, you're so sweet to him." Bev giggled.

"Not nearly as sweet as Ben is to you." Richie whispered in her ear with a shit eating grin before he left the dining hall.

Stan was on the deck sun bathing in his loin cloth, stopping Richie in his tracks as he looked over at the golden blonde. Looking up towards Mike Hanlon who was at the wheel, he seemed to be doing his best to ignore Stanley's tempting form.

Eddie finished helping Bill with the rigging before scoffing as he passed Stan, "You're acting like a slut out here in a loin cloth…" Eddie commented.

"So, what if I want an even tan?" Stan shot back.

"We all know the real reason you're dressed like that, don't even lie." Eddie said passing Richie who shook his head, returning back to reality.

Heading down to his cabin, Richie noticed Will cocooned in a blanket, “Richie?” He asked in a faint voice.

“It’s me.” Richie confirmed, “I brought you water, and some bread with honey.”

“Oh, thank you…” Will sounded both appreciative, and ready to break into tears.

“What’s wrong?” Richie looked over his pouting face as he could barely open his eyes.

“You’re so nice.” Will responded before shakily taking the mug in his hand, bringing it to his lips.

Richie noted that Will spilled plenty of water down his chin as he chugged it down, feeling very thirsty. Richie took the empty mug, “I can get you some more water if you need?”

“Oh, it’s ok… I should be the one fetching for you…” Will said before taking a bite of his honey bread.

“I consider this my fault. I shouldn’t have let you drink so much.” Richie shrugged a little.

Will ate slowly, “The sunshine hurts…” Will said cutely as the sunlight was peaking through a hole in the curtains.

“By late afternoon you should feel a lot better… just rest up ok?” Richie smiled warmly, taking the empty plate away from Will.

The blonde rested on his side, the blanket concealing him entirely. “I owe you…”

“You owe me nothing.” Richie assured him, “Stay in my cabin until you feel like you want to leave. If you’re still here when I get back, I’ll have a nap beside you. It’s going to be a while before we can dock again.” Richie informed him.

“Ok… thank you.” Will groaned painfully, closing his eyes some more.

Richie smiled, heading back down to the dining room to drop off the empty plate, and mug in the wash bin. Exiting the dining hall, Richie wandered the deck of the ship. Mike Wheeler stood with Lucas, and Dustin as the three of them were attempting to catch some fish over the side of the boat. “Catch anything good out there?” Richie asked looking into their shallowly full buckets of wiggling fish.

“I’m trying to, but it’s a shitty pole Mike leant us.” Dustin said with an eye roll.

“It’s not a shitty pole, you’re just a shitty fisherman.” Mike Wheeler snapped back.

Richie chuckled, “You two are going to be fucking in no time.”

“Ew!” Mike grimaced.

“Take that back.” Dustin pointed at Richie.

“You still owe me for making me chase you around Mikos. I own you.” Richie smirked darkly, sending a bit of a shiver down Dustin’s back.

“Yes, my lord.” Dustin responded before going back to fishing.

Richie chuckled a bit, before glancing towards the front of the ship where Steve was staring out at the water quietly. “He’s really protective of you two.” Richie commented.

“Steve? Yes. He’s been helping us stay alive since we were kids.” Dustin explained. “He’s a good guy, but he worries a lot.”

“That’s usually a sign of being a good person.” Richie nodded, “I hope he finds being part of the crew a good change for you three. Living on Mikos as thieves was only going to get you so far…” Richie explained.

“Steve always talked about getting out of that place, so I guess this is our opportunity.” Lucas said glancing over at Steve.

“Can you tell us anything more about this wedding we’re stopping in Valora?” Dustin asked curiously.

“It’s my sister’s wedding. My father and the recently dead father of her betrothed made an arrangement for her to marry a monster essentially. We want to stop it before she ends up in a situation she can’t handle.” Mike explained casting his line again.

“Or dead herself.” Richie added before turning towards the door leading below deck. “I’m going to check on Will and take a rest of my own. Good luck with the fishing.” Richie nodded to them, heading downstairs.

Upon entering his cabin, Richie spotted Will lying on his back fast asleep. Taking his boots off, Richie got into bed, relaxing next to him. Will snored peacefully, making Richie oddly much calmer as he closed his eyes for a short rest. There was nothing quite like an afternoon nap.

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As they got closer to Valora kingdom, the tension was a little bit higher. Everyone seemed to understand mutually that this mission was a big deal. Bill and the new crew mates got to work rigging the ship, so it sailed as quickly along the coast as possible.

Richie adjusted his hat as he stood by the front of the ship, his foot resting on the edging comfortably as his homeland came into view. It had been a while since he had been home. It wasn’t going to be a welcome homecoming either. If anything, it would be the most awkward one in the history of homecomings.

Will made his way over to Richie, looking out at the coast with him, “So this is where you’re from?” Will questioned.

“Unfortunately.” Richie said grimly.

“Were you a middle class family?” Will asked curiously, “I’ve heard the middle class can sometimes afford decent slaves.”

Everything went back to slavery with Will it seemed. Richie looked at him, “Not exactly.” Richie was a bit uncomfortable about the question, Will picked up on it quickly.

Will looked at him, “I’m not going to judge you even if you were to

tell me you were poor. I have nothing." Will reminded.

Richie looked at Will, "Will… you're a good friend." Richie patted his shoulder before looking out to the water.

Will didn't press on as they docked. Steve was left in charge of guarding the ship along with Dustin, Lucas, and Max. Richie didn't want to put the new people in any danger, but Max herself expressed interest in not venturing onto Valora soil ever again so he left her behind as well.

Richie stepped off his board, a glared over at another ship docked nearby to his. The ship was unrecognizable to Will, but it seemed Richie knew who ever owned it. "Who's ship is that?" Will asked quietly.

"The Hockstetter ship." Richie said as they started to walk off together.

The ship seemed a little big for a poor or middle-class suitor. This made Will believe Richie might have come from a noble family instead. It would make sense then why his family afforded him a slave as a child.

The market place was one of the first areas the crew visited. It seemed everyone was silent as they ventured through the crowds of people. There were well dressed people everywhere it seemed. It was clear there was some sort of event happening, but Will was confused as usually only royalty had that many people celebrating their wedding.

The crew marched their way to the castle together. Stopping outside the doors of the castle, two guards looked at Mike and Richie before bowing their heads, "You've returned home, my lord."

"Just for my cousins wedding. That's all." Richie said to them as they opened the doors.

"Enjoy the wedding, sir." The guard said ignoring the rest of the entourage as they passed through the doors.

"Thanks." Richie said curtly before heading inside. Looking towards

Beverly, the redhead nodded to Richie.

It seemed everyone had already conversed as to what the plan was, but Will had no idea. Many people were lining up to greet the king as he sat on the throne. It was a mandatory thing it seemed that everyone pay their respects before they could be seated. Will was stopped gently by Mike Wheeler who took Will's place next to Richie as they ventured towards the throne. Will didn't understand why he couldn't stand near Richie, but he didn't argue.

The king laid eyes upon the two cousins, "Richard, you've returned. I never thought we'd see you again after you left for the slave boy." The king spoke coldy.

"Yes, I have returned. I wanted to see Nancy on her wedding day." Richie said, his arms behind his back as he stood tall, like he had something to prove.

"Wonderful. After this wedding, we'll discuss yours." The king said.

"Oh, I'm not getting married. You had the love of my life murdered, I'm not doing anything for you." Richie said seriously.

"We'll see about that." The king said simply, "You should lose your friends before the wedding, you wouldn't want something to happen to them." The king hinted before looking to Mike Wheeler, "You look ragged Michael, you should have come home sooner."

Mike said nothing, but simply followed Richie as he headed off without another word. Once they were far enough away from the king, the large group gathered together, "Beverly, you know what to do." Richie said.

Without a word, Beverly snuck off with a bundle of rags in her hands, "Bill. Georgie. You also know what to do." Richie told them before they slowly headed off.

Will wasn't told what everyone else was doing, he simply was given the orders to stick close to Richie, and do exactly as he said. Will had no problem following orders, but his mind was a bit jumbled as he realized Richie was the prince of Valora. It was terrible to think a

prince had to leave his home to live at sea, but Will understood Richie's reasoning.

Mike looked nervous as he stood nearby Richie. It seemed that Richie was picking up on his nerves, "Calm it down, Wheeler. If we look suspicious this plan won't work."

"I know… I just don't want anything to happen to my sisters." Mike explained quietly.

"They'll be fine. When has a plan of mine ever failed?" Richie grinned.

Mike looked ready to strangle Richie. Will looked at Richie, "I… didn't know you were a prince."

"It's really not as big of a deal as you think." Richie said to him, "It's not like I had any say in anything going on in my life."

Will looked down, nodding a bit as he knew how that felt. Upon hearing a strange whistle, Richie looked to Will, "You and the rest of the crew need to slip out of here together. Get back on the boat, ok?" Richie told him.

Will didn't like the idea of leaving without Richie, but he nodded his head, "Come on, Wheeler, let's get on with the plan."

Mike Hanlon, Stanley Uris, and Eddie Kaspbrak followed Ben Hanscom out of the castle. As they headed for the ship. Will followed the group, looking back at Richie once more before he followed his orders. Once they were a few yards from the castle, Beverly, Bill and Georgie stood with two women, one about Steve's age, the other Georgie's age, dressed in poor clothing, their heads covered by ragged hoods. Will didn't recognize them, but followed the group back to the ship.

Immediately, Mike Hanlon got to the wheel with Stan, getting their next course ready. Will stood by the edge of the boat, waiting for Richie to show up. "Richie better know what he's doing…" The oldest of the new women spoke.

"Who are you?" Will asked after a moment.

Beverly smiled, “This is Nancy Wheeler. That’s Holly Wheeler. They’re Mike Wheeler’s sisters.”

Dustin came over to them, sticking out a hand to Nancy, “I’m Dustin Henderson, but some women have dubbed me the best lover they’ve ever ha-” He was cut off as Steve pressed a hand to his face, shoving Dusting away.

“I’m sorry about him, he’s never seen a beautiful woman before.” Steve said looking at Nancy with a small smile, “I’m Steve Harrington. Nice to meet you.”

Nancy smiled back at him, the two of them nearly completely forgetting about Dustin who was grumbling with annoyance while Lucas, who was rigging up the ship from afar, looked more than amused. “I’m Nancy.”

Bill had finished rigging the ship, and Mike began steering the ship off into the water. Will’s eyes widened, “What about Richie? What about Mike?”

“Captain’s orders are we head off.” Bill Denbrough explained.

“We can’t leave him behind.” Will stared horrified.

“We aren’t. He’s taking another ship.” Bill explained.

Will didn’t like it. Not one bit. He didn’t want to leave without Richie, he felt lost without him around. Looking down, Will decided to head to the cabin down below, wondering if Richie didn’t tell him his plans on purpose. Sitting down in the captain’s cabin, Will sighed, staring off into space as he worried about Richie’s safety.

Notes for the Chapter:

Thoughts? Feelings? LEAVE EM HERE!

7. Angry Reunion

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie and his cousin Mike meet up with the rest of the crew on Ibithos Island. Will isn't very happy with him when he arrives.

Chapter 7

It had been an entire day since the cousins were left in Valora Kingdom, but it seemed everything had been preplanned as they docked in a small island between the three kingdoms known as Ibithos. It was a place of trading for the most part, but it thrived.

Will refused to leave the ship as many of the other crew members went to the market place to stock up on supplies. He stayed below deck for several hours before coming onto the deck to spot a familiar ship docking nearby. It was the Hockstetter ship. Immediately Will became nervous they had been followed, but then Will noticed Richie, and his cousin Mike heading off the ship together. Ben looked at Will, “See? All part of the plan.” He smiled a little before heading off the ship.

Will followed Ben as he stood before Richie, “Long time no see.” Ben smiled.

“Sorry, I had some asshole’s boat to jack.” Richie grinned before looking back at a small crew that was walking off the Hockstetter ship, “This is the other crew. They’re going to sell the Hockstetter ship and buy another ship with the money. Then they’re going to sail with us. To West shire.”

“It would have been nice to have known the plans.” Will spoke up, annoyance in his voice as he stared at Richie.

Eyeing Will for a moment, Richie stepped over to him, standing before him confidently, “I don’t like sharing all of my plans at once.”

“Why?” Will’s anger was something new, and very intriguing to

Richie.

“It can lead to betrayal… but I see someone is a little sensitive.” He looked Will over, “Go back on the ship, I need to speak with Ben. I’ll deal with you later.” Richie said, not appreciative of the anger.

Will looked at him sternly, not moving. “No.”

Richie leaned close to his face, “Go, or I move you myself. You really don’t want me to embarrass you, do you?” Richie challenged.

Will and Richie had a stare down for another moment before Will resigned, heading to the cabin he had spent most of the past twelve hours hiding inside. Will was pacing back and forth for several minutes before he heard the door open. Richie walked inside, closing the door behind him, “Don’t you ever speak to me like that again in front of my crew. You understand?” Richie looked at Will sternly.

“You didn’t tell me anything! You didn’t tell me you were going to leave me alone! I’m your cabin boy, and you didn’t trust me enough to tell me we were going to be leaving you behind?” Will went off, seemingly the first time he’d been angry about anything.

Richie noticed how Will’s body vibrated with anger, and potentially fear, “I told you, I don’t tell everything I have planned to one single person. It can lead to betrayal whether it be on purpose or accidental. In this case, I feel my crew wouldn’t do it on purpose, but being tortured for information is quite possible.” Richie explained.

Will huffed, “Fine, keep things from me… I’m just your slave anyway…” Will didn’t have a good handle on how to react when he was angry, he showed all of his insecurity, and seemed whiney to say the least.

“You’re my cabin boy, not my slave. Now stop whining, I’m back now, and we’re about to set sail the moment everyone else returns to the boat.” Richie told him.

“I’m not whining! I was worried! I thought you were going to die out there.” Will clarified.

Richie walked over to him, placing both of his hands on Will’s

shoulders, looking Will in the eye, Richie looked at him seriously, “I’m sorry. I should have told you. Next time I will tell you more, but I still stand by what I said before… I don’t like sharing all of my plans.”

Will looked at him for a moment before lowering his gaze to the floor, “Thank you…”

Richie nodded, withdrawing his hands, “Now come on, I don’t want you pouting all day. Let’s get the ship ready to set sail.”

“You said… we’re going to West Shire?” Will questioned.

“Yes. It’s part of my big plans. The second crew will meet us there in the new ship.” Richie explained as he and Will headed to the ship deck.

“Can we trust these new people?” Will asked quietly.

“I hope so.” Richie said simply, not adding much ease to Will’s worries.

Everyone brought plenty of supplies back from the marketplace. Richie and Will helped put their supplies away before Richie left to the cabin to make a list of inventory items. Sitting at the table with his leather book, Richie dipped his quill in black ink before scratching it onto the paper. The sound of it caught Will’s ears, making him think of all the times he’d heard the masters of Pavlovia writing up owning rights for their slaves.

Richie eventually looked up at him, “You alright, Will?”

“Yes.” He said quickly without time to think.

Richie looked at him for a moment, “You look lost in thought.” Richie said before dipping his quill once again before he began writing.

Will stared at the top of the table, “Your plans are dangerous, but very brave.” Will spoke softly, “You could die trying to do this, you know?”

“I know. I’ve always known, but at this point, I have nothing left to lose.” Richie said calmly.

“Does your crew feel the same?” Will asked.

“Most of them didn’t have it so good before joining my crew. They’re happiest right now, living as equals, and working towards this future we all need to have. Everyone I started travelling with agreed they’d rather die trying for this mission than live in the world the way it is now.” Richie informed Will.

“I suppose I have no real reason to live either… so for me this mission isn’t causing me to feel the fear of death… but I fear your death.” Will told him seriously, “I think… if you died, I’d have no one left.”

Richie looked at him fondly, “You have friends on the ship.”

“I do, but they’re not you.” Will replied thoughtfully, “You’re so different from everyone else…”

Richie shook his head, “Not that different. Sure, I was born a prince, but that’s about it. Everyone here fights just as hard as I do.”

“They fight for you and your cause, because they believe in you. You’re an inspiring person and an incredibly caring human being. I’d never met someone like you before. I’m lucky to know you.” Will told him softly.

Richie smiled, “You’re getting better, you know?”

“What?” Will asked confused.

“You were angry today. Slaves aren’t allowed to show their anger, but you did.” Richie pointed out.

Will smiled a little, “I guess I am getting better…”

Richie put his quill to paper again, “Next thing you’ll be jerking off like it’s nobody’s business.” Richie winked at him.

Will shook his head blushing, “No… I still can’t do that…”

Richie chuckled a little, “You’re so cute. You’re going to find happiness, I just know it. Who knows, maybe in West Shire Island you’ll want to settle down. Your family is probably still there.” Richie reminded him.

Will looked down thoughtfully, “I remember my mom’s voice when she sang to me… She used to sing me to sleep.” Will’s lips quirked into a small smile as he remembered her, “She used to play with my hair, and sing… it’s about the only thing about her that I can remember.”

Richie smiled at him gently, “She really loved you. That’s more than I had growing up.”

Will looked at him, “Your mom didn’t love you?”

“Well… to be fair I didn’t know if she did or not. She’s been in the west tower of the castle since I was little. She can breathe, and she’s capable of eating, but she’s trapped in her mind most of the time, she just stares out the window most days.” Richie explained, “I always felt like it was something my father had done to her, but there’s no proof. I’ve only heard from my aunt hints that my mother didn’t agree with my father most of the time.”

“Why would your father do anything to her though? He’s the king, and he’s the one who leads the country. Not her.” Will furrowed his brows.

“This is what I don’t know. All I do know is that my mother was the heir to the throne. I’m royal on her side, but once she married, all the power went to my father as king. I’ve heard he’s from Xanbar, the place in which alchemy, and other black magic stems from. ‘Oddly’ enough, my father was her only suitor that remained alive long enough to marry my mother. My only guess is he got his role unfairly, and because Valora is the kingdom with the most influence, it was my mother who was forced into a bad position. Xanbar is also where Patrick Hockstetter was from.” Richie explained.

Will listened thoughtfully, “I’m… sorry about your mother.”

Richie nodded a bit, “I don’t know life any other way, but it would

have been nice to know her more than by physical touch."

Will nodded. The two of them sat in silence for a while longer until Richie finished his inventory list. "It's getting late, did you want to have a bath?" Richie offered, "I was thinking of having one."

Will thought about it for a moment, "Well…" He considered it; he certainly loved baths, but they still made him feel guilty.
"I'll wash your hair again." Richie persuaded.

Will smiled a little at that, "Alright."

"Good. See you're getting better, you don't struggle as much to say yes to things now." Richie smiled before heading out of the cabin.

Will followed behind him, opting to help bring over buckets of water to the cabin. Beverly and Ben were standing by the edge of the boat, watching the sunset together. They turned back to see Richie and Will lugging buckets of heated water to the cabin, "Oooh, are you two having a bath together?" Beverly teased them.

"Yes, he's going to wash my hair." Will said without understanding he was making the situation more amusing for Beverly.

Beverly looked at Richie with an amused expression, "It's hair, Beverly, calm down." Richie rolled his eyes dramatically as they continued on their way.

Ben smiled at them, "That's cute."

"Not as cute as you two." Richie looked back with a shit eating grin.

Ben went beet red, making Richie laugh as he headed back to his cabin with Will. The two of them brought the water inside before filling the tub. Richie looked at Will, "You want to go first?"

Will shook his head, "You should go first."

Richie shrugged, taking off his clothing in front of Will like it was nothing, once again. Will's erection made its appearance known. Richie pointed at him, "You're taking care of that this time."

“What? No… I can’t…” Will covered himself with both hands. “I’m sorry it’s up, I just… I can’t help it…”

“It’s not your fault, I’m very attractive especially to virgins like you.” Richie winked, “Would you feel better if I was jerking off too?” Richie asked.

Will went bright red, “N-No… that would make it worse.”

“Masturbation, then bath time. It’s been decided.” Richie reached down, gripping himself.

Will whimpered a bit looking away, “I can’t…”

“No one’s going to beat you… unless you ask nicely for a spanking.” Richie teased still holding himself firmly as he also began erecting.

Will glanced over at his shaft again before looking away quickly, “Please, mine won’t go down if you do that…”

“Come on, every man needs to learn how to take care of himself and you aren’t a slave anymore, so you’re out of excuses.” Richie told him, “Take your clothes off, and let’s get this thing done. You’ll feel better, trust me.”

Will looked to be at a crossroads, stuck between doing what he was taught all his life was right, vs. what he really wanted to do. Finally, he remembered Richie’s words that told him to put that training behind him. With a sigh, Will pulled his shorts and white shirt off, standing naked in the middle of the cabin, “What do I do?” Will asked, his erection stiff as a tree branch.

“OK, so you grab it at the base, get a good feel for it, and start sliding your hand up and own the length of it to start off. That’s what I usually do.” Richie said casually as if they weren’t talking about masturbating.

Will did as Richie told him, the feeling of his own hand on his penis felt good, he let out a soft moan as he wasn’t used to his own touch. “Now move your fingers up towards the tip, and sort of rub around the underside.” Richie said, demonstrating on himself, making Will blush darkly.

“You know sometimes spitting on your hand first is the better way to do it. It makes the movement much easier, and you don’t give yourself rub burn.” Richie said before spitting on his hand, and moving it back to his erection.

Will watched, mimicking Richie before moving his fingers around the head of his penis. Will bit his lower lip, moaning as his hand began to move on its own, doing what felt best. “Oh God… this… I shouldn’t be doing this…” Will’s shoulders were tense, his wrist working himself quickly.

Richie closed his eyes for a moment, “Oh, yes you should… as much as you want to…”

The sounds Will made were what Richie was hyper focused on as he rubbed himself carefully. The noises, and Will’s naked body before him were working him up rather quickly. “Fuck… before you… fuck…” Richie could barely get out his sentence as he kept losing his train of thought, “Before you come, make sure you’re covering the head of your cock… if not you might come on the floor or something.”

“Oh…. Ok…. Oh my God… this is so good… thank you for showing me…” Will’s voice was breathy between his moans.

Richie smiled a little, attempting to keep his eyes closed, “Yes… you’re welcome… oh fucking hell…” Richie moaned before he heard Will whimper.

Opening his eyes, he watched the blonde shuddered with a shrill moan, before he released into his own hand. The white substance he’d produced seemed to surprise him. Richie groaned as seeing Will climax sent him over the edge. Richie came into his hand looking relieved. As he looked over to see Will, he noticed the perplexed look on Will’s face. The blonde panted, looking around for something to clean his hand with. Richie pointed to a white napkin on the corner of the table, “Just wipe it on that, and toss it in one of the buckets.”

Richie took the other napkin on the table, cleaning his hand off before tossing it in the same bucket. The two of them looked at one another, “You feel any better?” Richie asked him.

Will nodded a little, smiling, “A lot better…”

“Good. Congratulations on your first masturbation. I feel like a proud father.” Richie laughed.

Will laughed a bit at that, “Get in the tub… I’ll wash your hair first.” Will told Richie.

“I’m the captain here, I make the orders.” Richie teased before getting into the tub, relaxing in the water that was no longer scalding hot. “Perfect temperature…” Richie sighed with relief.

Will sat on his knees next to the tub, visibly more relaxed. “So… do you think we should make that our pre-bath ritual?” Richie teased, cleaning his body with a wink.

Crawling behind him, Will gently ran his fingers through Richie’s dry hair, “Do you think we should?” Will didn’t realize Richie was teasing.

Richie enjoyed the head massage he was getting, “If you’re for it so am I. Maybe next time we’ll jerk off over the side of the boat just to freak out the other crew members.”

Will smiled a little, washing Richie’s hair as he scooted down to wet it. “Why do they tease us? Don’t they know you and I are best friends?”

Richie shrugged, “I don’t know. I think they assume I’m fucking you, because I’ve already had sex with two members of the crew.”

“Really? Who?” Will asked curiously.

“Bill and Mike.” Richie said quickly.

“Your cousin?!” Will looked horrified.

“Hanlon. Mike Hanlon. I’d never fuck my cousin he’s gross.” Richie chuckled a bit.

“He’s not gross, but you two having sex would be gross.” Will said rubbing Richie’s curls clean.

Richie relaxed in the tub once he had been cleaned off. “How did it work with you and the others? Did you… accept their penis or…” Will as genuinely curious.

“You’re a little pervert, you know that?” Richie joked, “I only accepted from Mike. I wanted to see what it would feel like, and we had both been drinking way too much.”

“Oh, I see.” Will nodded, rubbing Richie’s shoulders free of knots.

“What about you? Now that you’re free to choose, would you be accepting or giving?” Richie asked him, feeling insanely comfortable with Will.

“I… don’t think I’d be any good at giving, but I wish I could… I have never learned how to give… I only know the basics of accepting.” Will explained.

“Really? I’d be curious as to what they taught you.” Richie glanced back at him.

“I was told to relax, and not struggle. Once the pain gets to be too much, I’m to grit my teeth, or bite down on something solid, and think of something else.” Will said casually.

“No… that’s not how it should be…” Richie turned so he was looking at Will, “That’s advice for getting raped, not for enjoying yourself, ok? That’s not something you should ever have been told, because you should never be raped. Understand?” Richie was angry, but he held it in, it wasn’t meant to be directed at Will.

The blonde could see the seriousness in Richie’s eyes. “I… wasn’t aware the person receiving could enjoy it…” Will looked a bit dumbfounded.

“If you’re with the right person, they’ll make sure you do enjoy it.” Richie said before pulling the plug out of the tub, allowing the water to drain into the tubes that led to the sea.

“Let’s go get your bath water.” Richie said as they both pulled on pants.

Richie was attempting to push aside the anger he felt at the trainers of Pavlovia. Will followed Richie, he felt something was wrong, but he didn't understand. Richie was silent from the way out of the cabin all the way until they got back. Richie began dumping the water into the tub.

"Are you… angry at me?" Will asked after a few moments, "You don't have to wash my hair if you are…"

Richie turned to look at him once he dumped the final bucket in the water, "No, I'm not mad at you, Will. I'm mad at those bastards that taught you such terrible things… You deserved so much better than that."

Will hugged Richie, their bare torsos pressing together briefly, "I wish everyone could be so kind." Will said to him.

Richie rubbed his back gently, "If you ever need real sex advice, come to me, don't listen to that shit you learned in slave hell." Richie told him.

"Alright." Will nodded as they pulled away from each other.

"Now get into your bath, you want to be all clean in case we run into your mom tomorrow." Richie smiled, hoping that things would go their way tomorrow.

Notes for the Chapter:

Thoughts? Feelings? Leave them with me!

8. West Shire Island

Summary for the Chapter:

> The Raveness crew arrives at West Shire Island. Richie's Plans are slowly coming together.

Chapter 8

Docking in West Shire Island was a strange thing. There were so few people around, Richie wondered if they even had a population to speak of. Still, he had faith. The crew decided to hang around the ship, some of them heading to the market place to brows around the moment the ship docked. Richie approached the first person he saw, “Excuse me. I’d like to speak to whom ever is in charge of this place.” Richie handed the man some gold coins, watching the man look them over before nodding.

Will looked around curiously, not having any memories of the place thus far. Sticking close to Richie, Will watched as the dark haired man led them deeper into town. The destroyed houses along the way into town caught Will’s attention as it looked like nature was trying to reclaim the homes that hadn’t been patched up. The raid. It had to have been from the raid. Several of the lived-in homes didn’t appear to be in much better shape, but regardless, they were liveable.

They were led over to a scruffy looking older man who took in Richie’s appearance for a moment, “Who’s this, Tom?”

"My name is Richie Tozer, you’re the leader of this place?” Richie asked curiously.

“I am. I’m Hopper. Jim Hopper.” The man was a bit stand-offish, but Richie could understand after the history of that place. “Why did you want to know?”

“I’m looking to change the way this world runs, and I’m going to need some help.” Richie said to him.

Hopper scoffed, “Yeah, we’re a little busy right now. Try again some

other time." Hopper was about to walk off.

"Wait, one last thing." Richie looked at Will before pulling Will forward, "This is Will Byers. I'm looking for his family."

Hopper looked at Will, a look of shock in his face, "Will Byers? That's impossible…"

"Not impossible." Richie corrected.

Hopper looked to Richie, "Fine, I'll take you to his mother."

Will was nervous, his body going a bit numb as Richie held onto his arm, walking him behind Hopper. "Is this your back up plan to get me to help you, son? It's not going to work just so you're aware." Hopper told him gruffly.

"No, I figured you might not want to listen, but at the very least, this one needs to come home." Richie spoke honestly.

Hopper said nothing more, taking them to a small broken down looking house. Knocking on the door, a beautiful woman with the same facial features as Will opened the door, looking at Hopper first, "Yes? What is it, Hop?"

"Joyce, they claim this is your son. This man brought him home." Hopper held an arm out towards Will.

Joyce was out of the house before anyone could utter another word. Her eyes raked over the blonde before her, both of her hands cupping his face as she looked into his eyes. Richie watched as she teared up, "Will?"

Will's eyes teared up instantly, both of his hands on hers, "Mom?"

Joyce pulled him in for a hug, "Oh, baby I thought I lost you forever…" She hugged him close.

Will closed his eyes, taking in the feeling of being held in loving arms for the first time since before he could remember. Richie smiled softly, feeling that even if nothing else in his life panned out, this one good deed would make up for everything he missed out on.

Richie was next to be pulled into her embrace as she hugged he and Will at the same time, “Thank you so much or returning him.” Richie felt a kiss placed on the crown of his head before she let go, looking over Will like he was the most precious thing to her.

“You’re welcome Mrs. Byers.” Richie bowed his head.

“Joyce. Please just call me Joyce.” She insisted.

“Joyce, then.” Richie corrected.

“What is your name?” Joyce asked.

“I’m Captain Richie Tozier of The Raveness. I’m not your average pirate, so you have nothing to fear.” Richie insisted.

Joyce smiled a little, “Richie, is there anything I can do for you? I know we don’t have much here on West Shire Island, but I would gladly give you any payment you see fit for bringing my boy home.”

Richie shook his head, “No. I came here to make the world a little better and I achieved that at least to some degree.”

Will held onto his mother, feeling so happy to have her back as she ran her fingers through his long hair. Hopper looked from Joyce to Richie who stood calmly. “Alright, what did you want to talk about earlier?” Hopper asked.

Joyce gently pulled Will into her home, muttering something about meeting his brother. “Aren’t you too busy?” Richie asked giving him a look.

“Well, considering you did my wife a huge favour, I’m inclined to at least hear you out.” Hopper told him.

“Oh, you’re Will’s-” Richie was cut off.

“No. I came after that bastard Lonnie walked out on her.” Hopper said quickly.

“I see.” Richie nodded, “Is there a place we can talk?”

Hopper nodded, leading him to a large building that stood tall despite prior damage to it. The building seemed to be a court room, or a place the entire city could go for meetings. Richie wasn't sure which, but it was large. Looking around, Richie was led to a room in the back of the building that consisted of a large round table, and chairs for the most part. Richie sat down across from Hopper, "So… what's on your mind for these big dreams of yours?"

"I don't normally feel comfortable sharing this information, but I'm the Prince of Valora Kingdom." Richie started.

"Congratulations." Hopper said dryly.

Richie couldn't help but smile at Hopper's personality, "I've seen how my father leads the country, and I've also watched him plotting to take over other kingdoms. He rules like a tyrant, and his rules, and his laws aren't making anyone but him and the rich happy. I want to take over, and I want to help other countries, and kingdoms, not just Valora. I want this world to experience peace for the first time."

"That's a big dream, but I'm not sure how you'd do it." Hopper told him honestly.

"But I do." Richie told him confidently, "All I need from West Shire Island is back up."

"Backup? I don't think you noticed, but we don't have a lot of residents here to spare. We barely have enough people here to help with farming, and not only that, but our trade is terrible. Ever since the raid, we barely have people stopping in through the market. This place is located in the middle of the sea between the worst possible locations: Xanbar, and Stavros. No one wants to come here and people we do have here, they're either stolen in the night by Stavros monks, or by people in Xanbar. Lord knows what they do to them in Xanbar, but everyone knows, if you're in Stavros, you're dead." Hopper lamented.

Richie looked at him for a moment, nodding his head, "What I if I said I could move your people to a better location?"

"Move us? How? We have one ship, and not all forty of us will fit on

it." Hopper looked at Richie, "Even if they did agree to moving, where would they go?"

"Pavlovia." Richie revealed.

"Pavlovia? The place where they train all the slaves? Why the Hell would we want to go there?" Hopper furrowed his brows.

"By the time I'm done with it, they won't be training slaves anymore. I'm shutting that place down." Richie said confidently.

"What makes you think you have the power to take on an island like that?" Hopper questioned.

"Because by that point, I'll have three ships, and over 60 men and women willing to fight for justice against just under eighty slavers." Richie told him.

"Don't forget the hundreds of slaves." Hopper looked at him like he was insane.

"Slaves don't fight. They're not allowed. They're heavily trained not to, even if their master is in danger. You know where I leaned that? From Will. He grew up there, so he knows everything about that place. Once the slavers are taken care of, there's hundreds of men and women that can help rebuild a society, and I'd be putting you and Joyce in charge of that, because I know you two are good people who want what's best for everyone."

Hopper looked at him, leaning back in his chair for a moment, "It's crazy…"

"Crazy, yes. Impossible? No." Richie stated firmly.

"So, if I take over that place, hypothetically, you want what from us after that?" Hopper asked.

"Just support. I'm not going to lie and say nothing, but if I'm going to take over three kingdoms, I'm going to need support. Pavlovia wouldn't be the only place I talk to about getting support. There are plenty of other islands suffering under the rule of Valora Kingdom and I intend to meet every single one of their leaders." Richie

explained.

“What if you fail?” Hopper asked.

“Then you can claim that I kidnapped your people, moved you to Pavlovia and made you all my slaves.” Richie said calmly.

“You’d tarnish your name like that?” Hopper asked.

“I would, because the people who were there would know the truth, and they’re the only ones that matter.” Richie explained.

Hopper sighed, “I’ll call a city council meeting for this evening, but it’s going to be your job to convince these people… I won’t force anyone to leave who doesn’t want to. Also, how would the other half of the island get there, the half that doesn’t fit on our one ship?”

“They’ll join up on one of my ships.” Richie explained.

Hopper nodded a bit, “Alright… well… I’ll see you here at sun down.” Hopper said standing up.

Richie nodded to him before getting up, and exiting the building. At least now, Richie was being given a chance.

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After a nice dinner at Joyce and Hopper’s place, Richie and Will brought all of the crew to the courthouse, except for Mike Wheeler, Steve Harrington, and Dustin Henderson who opted to stay watch on the main ship.

“Everyone, quiet down.” Hopper called out, silencing the members of the island. “I’m calling you here tonight, because we’re being given an offer at a new way of life. All he asks is that you listen to him.” Hopper said before nodding to Richie who stood before the gathered crowd confidently.

“First off, I want to say that after I’ve said what I’m here to say, you have three days to make a decision. I don’t want a decision tonight, because it won’t be well thought out, and I want the very best for the people of West Shire Island.” Richie said, watching a few of the

people in the audience look at him with surprise.

Will smiled at Richie as he sat between Joyce, and his older brother Jonathan. “I want to start by asking you all a question.” Richie looked around the room, “Are you all tired of the way life is? People just coming here, taking your friends and family away with no regard for anyone else? Are you tired of working so hard on fruitless endeavors? Most of all, are you tired of the way the rich get to live happy spoilt lives, while everyone who actually works hard has to suffer in silence?” Richie heard a ‘yes’ from the audience after everything he’d just said.

“This place, it was ransacked about a decade and a half ago, and did anyone offer to help you rebuild this place?” Richie asked, hearing a bunch of ‘no’s’ coming from the crowd, “I didn’t think so.”

He walked around in front of the people seated before him, “Would all of you like to live in a world where you’re better protected? Treated better from the other countries and kingdoms?” Richie listened as everyone agreed with him, “What about a world where people are treated as equals? A world where people get to vote, and have a voice without the fear of being killed or maimed?” Richie was happy to hear people agree once again.

“I have a couple of friends who grew up poor, so poor in fact they had to steal every day just to survive. You know what that cost them? That cost a little boy a hand. We shouldn’t be hurting people who are poor, we should be helping them.” The crowd was entirely enthralled by everything Richie was saying, and Will looked around in awe; Richie was made to rule it seemed. “Who here loves women?” Richie raised his hand watching everyone else in the room raise a hand as well, “Good, because I think women also need to be treated a little better. I don’t think it’s right to send out daughters or sisters into prostitution just to earn a little extra coin, I think its disgusting to treat people like that.” He looked towards Beverly and Max who looked at him fondly.

“That raid that happened here years ago, that was a tragedy that should never have happened. West Shire Island was a thriving community before it was attacked. People were killed, houses were destroyed, and women and children were taken from families, and

sold to Pavlovia where people are brainwashed to become slaves. I don't think that's right, do you?" Richie listened to the crowd as they agreed heavily with him.

"Well, I suppose you're wondering who this handsome man is talking about big dreams, and how the world should be." Richie smiled a little looking around as a few people laughed, "It might surprise you to know that I'm Richard Tozier, prince of Valora Kingdom." Everyone became silent, looking quite shocked, but Richie continued speaking, "I like to go by Richie, personally, but that's neither here nor there. I'm here talking to you, because I think every single person in this room deserves better, and I know that when you hear the name Wentworth Tozier, you all feel a little bit sick inside. So do I, because he's a tyrant. He doesn't deserve to rule, because he doesn't care about anyone else but himself. He doesn't even care about me." Richie told them all.

"What do you want from us?" Someone in the crowd asked suddenly.

Richie pointed to them, "That's an excellent question, what I want from you, is support and I know, there's only forty residents of this island still standing strong. I'm not here to take some of you and run off, but what I am asking is going to change your lives, possibly for the better."

Richie let his words sink in, "You're not doing too well here on this island. You're trapped between evil alchemists, and a God fearing tribe, both of which come here to take people away when they feel like it. Your trade is terrible, because no one wants to come here. People think this island is a lost cause with nothing to give. As for farming, its difficult with so few worker hands around. I don't think you should have to deal with that or the decaying homes around this place." Richie said honestly, "I have a solution, but only if you all can agree upon it. As I said, I expect no decisions today. I want you all to hear me out and then talk it over and take a few days to decide if its right for you." Everyone looked between each other, some of them shrugging, deciding they did want to hear the solution he had for them.

"I want you all to move from West Shire Island, to Pavlovia." Richie said listening as a lot of chatter erupted before him much to his

expectation.

“Pavlovia? How would we even get to Pavlovia?” One person asked.

“Aren’t there slavers and slaves living on Pavlovia Island?” A woman asked nervously.

“One question at a time, but I’ll answer these first two.” Richie said watching the room go silent again, “First question: We would get to Pavlovia using your one ship, and my two ships. All of us would be able to make it on three ships. There would be sixty of us roughly. Second question: You’d be correct, there are only slavers and slaves on Pavlovia. There’s just under eighty slavers, and over a hundred slaves in training of various ages.” Richie said.

“How do you expect sixty of us to take on about two hundred people?!” A woman in the back asked with outrage.

“Slaves don’t fight!” Will called out before Richie motioned for him to stand up.

Will walked over to Richie, standing beside him. “Slaves aren’t allowed to fight, it’s a rule.” Will informed the crowd.

“You want to make a speech? Now’s your chance.” Richie muttered to him.

Will sighed, looking around the room a bit nervous, “I’m Will Byers. I was born here on West Shire Island, but then I was taken away when that raid happened. I don’t honestly remember much of this place, but what I do know is Pavlovia. It’s where I was raised to be a slave, at least until Richie and his crew saved me.” Will looked at Richie fondly before looking back at the crowd, “There’s a really good chance that so long as everyone is on board, we can do so much better moving to Pavlovia. There are plenty of lush crops, apple trees, and a big market that thrives. Not to mention, if you stop the slavers, the slaves will be more than willing to help with the work on Pavlovia in exchange for freedom.”

“Sixty against eighty is the true battle number. It still might not sound great, but my crew would be on the front lines, me ahead of

them. Each of us could take down at least two each, I'm sure of it." Richie looked around, "Is there any other questions for me before I leave you with your thoughts?" Richie asked, Will standing beside him quietly.

Everyone looked around before shaking their heads. Richie nodded, "We'll meet back here in three days for the final meeting. I'd be willing to answer any further questions you have at that point in time before I get your votes. You all can go back home if you wish." Richie told them, Hopper simply nodded.

The people of West Shire Island got up, leaving together. Some were chatting amongst themselves while others were simply silent as they thought over everything Richie had to say to them that evening. "I think that turned out well." Richie looked to Will.

"I have my doubts they'll all agree, but we can certainly hope." Hopper said to Richie before placing a hand on his shoulder, "Did you need a place to stay?"

"No, I've actually got my own bed in my cabin. I'll sleep there. Thank you though." Richie said to him with a bow of his head.

Richie stepped out of the building followed by his crew, he only made it ten paces before he saw a frantic Dustin running at him from the darkness, "Dustin?" Richie looked at him concerned.

"It's Mike! They've taken him!" Richie glanced back at Mike Hanlon realizing Dustin was talking about his cousin, "Who? What are you talking about?"

Dustin shakily handed Richie a scroll to which he unrolled it, reading it over. "By the orders of King Wentworth Tozier, I hearby declare Mike Wheeler an enemy of Valora Kingdom on the account of kidnapping, and treason. This is bullshit!" Richie shouted angrily before reading the rest, "He is sentenced to death. His death will be at the behest of the Stavros High Priest Martin Brenner." Richie went visibly pale as he read the last line, looking around at his crew he looked at them desperately, "My crew is with me, the second crew stays here and offers help to those in need on West Shire Island. Will you stay here. Let's go everyone!"

“No!” Will shouted, eyes wide.

“Will, this is not the time to argue!” Richie snapped at him.

“You’re not leaving me again! I’m going with you!” Will gripped his arm.

Richie looked at him seriously, “Stay with your family.”

“You are my family.” Will said without thinking.

Joyce looked a bit sad, but seemed to understand, “It’s ok. Just bring him back.” She nodded her head, holding hands with Hopper.

Richie nodded to her, “Alright, I promise I will.”

Will followed Richie as he and the rest of the crew ran towards The Raveness, determined to get back Mike Wheeler. There was no way in Hell Richie was going to let that Volcano God eat someone else he loved.

Notes for the Chapter:

Are you excited for next chapter?

9. Volcano

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie and his crew arrive on Stavros to find not only Mike, but someone new as well.

Chapter 9

“You wanted to come with me, you’re taking the staff with you.” Richie told Will who still wasn’t keen on the idea of fighting.

“I know… I’ll use it, but only if I have to.” Will said with a sigh as he held the staff in both of his hands.

Steve and Dustin were heavily interrogated as to why they didn’t put up more of a fight when the ship came to take Mike away. Steve had a bloody nose, and a black eye, Dustin simply had a few cuts on the top layer of his skin. Dustin and Steve both explained they were going to destroy the boat if Mike didn’t comply and go with them. To save both Steve and Dustin from a crispy death on the burning Raveness, Mike ordered them to stand down, and let the Valora soldiers take him.

“I never wanted to set foot on Stavros… damn it, Mike… why did you have to be so noble?” Richie pinched the place between his eyes.

Will looked down, “He really believes in you, Richie. I think he was worried if the ship was ruined it would all be over for you.”

“Yeah, no doubt. I just wish he didn’t give himself up like that… had they at least fought it out, I probably could have been here in time to stop this from happening.” Richie sighed.

Will rubbed his arm gently, “We’ll get him back.”

Richie nodded a bit, looking up as the sun began rising, “We’re close to the island…” Richie said spotting the huge volcano in the distance.

“I know this is hard for you… I wish there was something I could do to ease your mind, but this is something you have to do. Just like me

with my slave training… I have to undo it myself. Just know that I'm going to be right here with you the entire time." Will told him seriously.

Richie gave Will a sad smile, "Thank you."

Will held onto Richie's hand as they neared the island. Bill was the lead rigger on the boat, making sure everything was put in place to make the boat move as quickly as possible. Everyone on the crew ate in the dining hall, gaining their strength for the fight ahead of them. They wanted to make sure they had all the energy they needed. They all loved Mike Wheeler.

When the boat was as close as it could get, Bill threw the anchor in the water, ensuring they were docked. Georgie and Holly were the only two crewmates remaining on the boat as the rest of the crew jumped into the water together. They had one mission, and one mission only: Get Mike, and get off the island. That was what they intended to do.

Will clutched onto his staff tightly as he ventured onto the island with Richie. Max had her guns out, ready for battle, and Mike Hanlon was wielding a heavy iron hammer. Even Nancy was ready with some guns; Richie knew she was a good shot from their time in the woods as children.

"Get ready…. Anything could happen." Richie said as they cut through the woods, making their way towards the volcano. They spotted torches along a dirt path. The crew followed it, knowing they had to have been going the right way.

The entire group was left stunned as they came across the scene at the end of the path. There were dead bodies of monks strewn about the ground, blood pooling from their ears and mouths. There were no entry wounds or slash marks, meaning their deaths didn't make much sense. "Were they… poisoned?" Stan asked, nudging one of the bodies with his boot as he held a sword in hand.

"Doesn't look like it, or they'd be foaming from the mouth too." Eddie diagnosed.

“Let’s keep going.” Richie said as they continued to follow the trail of dead bodies up to the top of the volcano.

Richie’s mind was buzzing, he couldn’t handle the idea of being too late to save his cousin the same way he was too late to save his Zachary. The thought that this volcano was the last place Zachary was before he died made Richie’s stomach bubble with disgust. Zachary deserved so much better than the hand he was dealt.

Running up the trail towards the top of the volcano, it took the crew a while to reach the top, even at a fast pace. By the time they arrived, only three living people stood atop the volcano surrounded by more dead bodies. Mike Wheeler stood behind a bald woman who was dressed in nothing but white fabric wrappings, Mike was holding her up as she appeared too weak to stand, but her hand was out in a stopping motion, pointed at the high priest, “Papa…” She spoke angrily.

Mike looked back, “Richie?” he looked surprised.

“What the fuck is happening right now?” Richie looked both annoyed and confused.

“Stay back, heathen!” The high priest leered at Richie, “This is between me, and the eleventh daughter of Shakol.”

“Who is this asshole?” Richie asked Mike.

His cousin replied, “This is the high priest of the island.”

Richie had a cloud of darkness pass over his eyes that only Will could see. Stepping closer to the priest, he held up his metal staff threateningly, “Don’t come any closer.”

“Why? Are you afraid you might slip and fall in the volcano? Wouldn’t it be ironic if you died in there after all those people you killed?” Richie asked threateningly.

“Leave this island! I command you!” He shouted pulling the staff back, ready to hit Richie with it.

The bald girl in Mike’s arms jerked her head, the staff falling from his

hands into the volcano. Richie stared at him darkly, “You killed someone that meant a great deal to me… this is for him.” Richie lifted his leg quickly, kicking the high priest into the volcano below.

Richie watched him fall in the hot orange lava. It was done. Mike looked at Richie, “You came for me.”

“Of course, I did you idiot.” Richie snapped looking over at him, “Did you think I was just going to let you die here like Zachary?”

Mike shook his head, “No… I’m just glad to see you.”

Richie looked at him gently before looking to his crew, “Everyone… get back to the ship. If you see anything useful, take it, but otherwise, leave it, and get the ship ready for sailing back to West Shire Island.”

“Richie… we need to take her with us.” Mike Wheeler spoke up first, gesturing to the bald girl before him.

Richie nodded, “Sure. You’re responsible for her.”

Mike nodded, helping the girl walk back to the ship. Will didn’t head back, he simply stood nearby. “Do you need a minute?” Will asked him.

Richie looked into the volcano, nodding his head, “Yeah… I won’t be long.” Richie told him.

Will nodded, heading down the path, but stopping before he was too far away from Richie. Looking down into the volcano, he felt his eyes welling up with tears as he sheathed his sword. “Zachary. I miss you so much.” He said, tears slipping from his eyes, “I’m sorry I didn’t make it in time to save you. I regret it every day. We could have had forever, but I didn’t make it. This is my fault. I’m so fucking sorry.” Richie covered his face, his tears slipping from his fingers, falling into the volcano below.

Richie wasn’t sure if he was so tired and upset that he hallucinated it or not, but he heard a voice clearly in his head. “Go love. Be free.”

Unblocking his eyes, Richie stared down into the volcano. “Goodbye, Zachary. I’ll love you forever.” Richie said before heading down the

mountain path the way he came.

Will spotted him after a few minutes of travelling, he pulled Richie into a hug, spotting the tears in his eyes. Richie held onto him, sobbing hard into his shoulder. “It’ll be ok…” He told Will, “I’ll be ok.”

Will held him, stroking Richie’s hair gently. “Let’s get going… we’ve got a mission to get to.” Will said with a gentle expression on his face.

Richie nodded, sniffling a bit. The two walked side by side along the torch lit path of corpses. By the time they made it back to the beach, Bill Denbrough and Ben Hanscom were finishing loading a barrel of coconuts onto the ship. Will and Richie walked up the plank together before Mike Hanlon, and Steve Harrington began pulling the plank back onto the ship.

Once the anchor was back up, Bill got the ship rigged with the help of Dustin and Lucas. Mike Hanlon and Stanley Uris got the ship on course, but it seemed Mike Wheeler was no where to be seen. “Where’s my cousin?” Richie asked Max as she and Beverly attempted to take the coconuts below deck.

“He took that bald girl to his cabin. She looked really weak, so Eddie is down there taking a look at her.” Max explained.

Nancy came over with Holly, “Thank you for acting so fast, Richie. You’re a good cousin.”

Richie nodded to her, “I love the asshole.”

Nancy smiled before walking off with Holly under her arm, Georgie staring longingly at Holly as they headed below deck.

A loud rumbling came from the island, and Richie watched as the volcano began smoking, “Oh fuck… let’s get out of here.” Richie said just as they began sailing away from the island.

They managed to sail far enough away before the hot magma erupted from the volcano, seeping its way onto the edge of the beach. “Maybe their God really was a picky eater.” Richie said dryly before looking

to Will, “I’m going to go lie down for a bit… I’ll see you later.” He patted Will’s arm, slipping away silently.

Will watched him go, understanding that he needed some more time alone. Glancing over at the volcano, Will watched it silently, sending a silent prayer to Zachary, and everyone else who had been lost to it.

After half an hour of sailing, the volcano was out of sight, but the dark clouds over the island were impossible to miss. Will headed to the dining hall, sitting silently at the empty table. All he could think about was Richie, and how much pain he must have endured just being on the island. So close to where Zachary died. Letting his head rest on his arms, Will fell asleep in his saddened state.

Soft fingers ran through Will’s hair, making him hum softly as he woke up to see Beverly standing over him with a warm smile on her face, “Hey Will. Did Richie kick you out of the cabin?”

Will shook his head, “No, I just wanted to give him some space. Am I in the way?” he looked around noticing everyone was seated around him except for Richie. Even the new girl who was wearing one of Max’s very few dresses was there sitting with Mike Wheeler.

“You’re not in the way, silly. I just didn’t want you sleeping through dinner.” Beverly sat next to him, Ben on the other side of her.

Will smiled softly, slowly filling a plate with some of the delicious food Georgie had cooked. He decided to fill a second plate. “I’m going to go eat with Richie.” Will told them.

Beverly placed a wine bottle that wasn’t open yet under his arm, “Here you go.” She watched as he held it under his arm, “Tell him we love him.”

Will nodded, bringing the food down to Richie’s cabin. Richie was lying in his bed, only in his pants. “Hey Richie.” Will greeted, placing the food down at the table.

“Oh… I’m not really hungry, Will.” Richie spoke quietly, his eyes still red from tears.

Will looked at him, “You don’t have to eat, but in case you decide

you're hungry it's here. Is it ok if I sit here and eat?"

Richie nodded, "Yeah." Richie wiped his eyes.

Will had put a piece of bread on his own plate, and that's all he intended to eat. "That's all you're having?" Richie questioned.
"My stomach is in knots… I'm eating but… I can't eat much." Will confessed as he nibbled at his bread.

Richie looked at him gently, "Sorry if this was upsetting to you as well…"

"I just don't like seeing you hurting… it's difficult." Will admitted, "…Could I run you a bath?"

"I don't know…" Richie looked down.

Will looked at him, "…I'll wash your hair." He smiled a little, knowing it was how Richie persuaded him last time.

Richie looked up at him and smiled, "Alright."

Will got up from the chair, heading down to get hot water. Richie looked over at the food on the table, wishing he could stomach some. Richie knew he'd be sick if he tried. Watching Will bring down the bath water, Richie got out of the bed, helping Will pour the buckets in the tub. "Go ahead, and get in." Will said to him once the tub was full.

Instead of watching Richie undress, Will walked over to the table. He struggled with the cork for a minute before filling a goblet with the wine. Coming back over to the tub, Richie was lying down in the tub on his back, the water covering his privates. Will handed him the wine goblet. "Here, something to help make you feel better."

Richie smiled at Will gently, "Thank you." Taking a long drink, Richie held onto the goblet, his feet rubbing together in the warm water.

Will sat on his knees beside the tub, "Did you want to stay in bed alone tonight? I can find somewhere else to sleep if it helps."

Richie shook his head, “No, I’d rather you were there. Your breathing makes me sleep better.”

Will nodded his head, “Did you want a shoulder massage before I get to your head? Maybe even a foot massage?” Will offered.

No doubt Will was skilled in all of those areas, but Richie simply shook his head, “No, but thank you.” He downed the rest of his wine.

Will crawled to the spot behind him, helping Richie wash his hair. Massaging Richie’s scalp, Will was happy he could provide even small comfort to Richie. “Do you think I’m in over my head with these plans?” Richie asked Will, “Tell me honestly.”

Will shook his head despite Richie not being able to see him, “No. I think you can do anything.” Will said honestly.

Once Will was finished washing his hair, he got up, refilling the wine goblet before handing it back to Richie. “That’s good to hear.” Richie told him, “Your voice was really helpful at that city council meeting.”

Will smiled sweetly, sitting to the side of the tub on his knees, “I hope so. My mom felt really bad when she found out I was a slave… she cried.” Will said looking down.

“I don’t blame her.” Richie nodded taking a long drink, draining the glass quickly.

“Slow down. You’re drinking so fast.” Will said softly.

“I know what I’m doing, trust me.” Richie said as Will filled his cup again.

“It will be nice to see my mom again, and hopefully by then the townsfolk will have come to a decision about the move.” Will said to Richie calmly.

Richie nodded, “I can only hope.” He took his time draining the rest of the goblet before he decided it was time to get out of the tub.

Will got him a towel, not allowing his gaze to fall towards Richie’s penis. Richie wrapped the towel around himself, “Hey… you didn’t

get a boner this time." Richie commented.

Will shook his head before draining the tub, "I didn't look…"

"Here I thought I was losing my hot body." Richie winked before moving to the bed, lying down on his back, the goblet of wine lying empty on the floor.

Will gently placed the blanket over his body. "I hope you sleep well, Richie."

"Mm… you too." Richie held his eyes closed lying there content in his bed.

Will laid beside him, closing his eyes. Just before he fell asleep, he felt Richie's hand find his. Squeezing it gently, Will fell asleep holding onto Richie's hand.

Notes for the Chapter:

I hope you liked this chapter!

10. Water Lily

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie and Mike discuss the new girl on the ship on their way back to Pavlovia.

Chapter 10

Richie woke up early in the morning, his head throbbing. Will was sleeping peacefully beside him, their hands still holding one another. Richie gently let go of his hand, covering it with a blanket before he pulled on his clothing, heading out of his cabin. He squinted as he could hear the sound of Stanley Uris moaning from the hallway. Faintly, Richie could make out the name 'Mike' between the sounds of pure satisfaction. Shaking his head, Richie headed up to the deck of the boat, just in time to see the faint blue glow in the distance indicating it was almost sunrise.

To his surprise, Richie wasn't the only one on deck at such a time. "Mike? Well I guess this means you aren't the one having sex with Stan right now." Richie teased as he greeted his cousin who simply rolled his eyes, "Why are you up?"

"I couldn't sleep… I gave the new girl my bed." Mike Wheeler explained looking over at Richie.

Richie nodded, "So… how did the big massacre happen exactly? Was it you and that girl? There were no entry wounds, we thought maybe you poisoned those people?"

Mike shook his head, "No… it was nothing like that at all. I actually, did nothing… it was all her." Mike looked out to the sea, thinking back to what happened.

Richie leaned on the boat next to Mike, the wind billowing his dark locks, "Tell me everything."

Mike stared out into the water as he spoke, "I got taken to the high priest the moment I got to Stavros. He had this huge hut on the

island. That was where I first saw her… she was having her hair cut off her head, and they were rubbing these oils all over her body. She just stared at me, blank expression on her face. I've never seen that look in someone's eyes before." Mike started.

"She does strike me as different. Something tells me her upbringing wasn't exactly normal." Richie nodded.

"I didn't realize how different she was at first. The high priest explained that I was basically the first sacrifice before the main course." Mike sighed, "What a feeling that is. I was put in their jail for the night. It was nothing but straw in that place, just straw all over the floor, and bamboo cells. I was pretty surprised to see them bring the girl to the cell next to mine that night. I guess they were worried she'd try to run off, so they kept her locked up before the ceremony. I thought it was going to be my last night on Earth… I really didn't know what was going to happen to me, so, I just started talking to her." Mike looked at Richie, a soft expression on his face.

Richie felt a pang of guilt for Mike being in that situation in the first place, but he knew it really wasn't his fault. "What did you two talk about?"

"Well, I asked who she was, and why she was in the jail with me. She told me she was 'The Eleventh Daughter of Shakol." Mike looked at Richie, "She didn't seem to have a real name."

"Shakol? Who's that asshole?" Richie asked curiously.

"From what I gather, it's their God. I asked her what 'The Eleventh Daughter of Shakol' meant, and she told me every two decades they sacrifice a daughter of Shakol after she's born. I didn't get what made her the daughter of Shakol, but now I think I understand." Mike looked from Richie towards the water as the purple glow of the sunrise began illuminating the sky, "I told her who I was. We talked for a while, and she seemed not to know what to say to me… like she wasn't used to talking to people. She asked me what the world was like outside of the island, and I told her everything I thought she'd like to know. She was so interested in everything I had to say, and…" Mike couldn't help but smile a little, "I've never really experienced that before… a lot of girls used to think I was you, so they wanted to

talk to me, but she… didn't know you from anyone else…" Mike eyed Richie for a moment, self conscious about what he was telling him it seemed.

"I'm sorry about that…" Richie said looking at his feet.

"It's ok, it's not your fault." Mike said before continuing, "I told her about the mission we were on, because I figured she and I would both be dead by sunrise anyway. I told her what we were going to do for the world. She told me she wanted to help save the world too and then she asked me to take her with me. I told her I would if I could. We talked some more, I asked her about herself, but she didn't seem to have much to say other than the fact that she was born to die for the island. That was the purpose she was given. I told her she deserved better… because she does." Mike said looking to Richie who was smirking at him teasingly, "Stop it."

"I said nothing." Richie responded.

"You didn't have to, it's your face." Mike said before looking out to the water again a blush on his face, "Anyway… she and I talked about everything we could until a guard came in, and told me it was my time, and that the rest of the tribe would there for her next. I told her I was glad I met her before I died, and how I'd see her on the other side." Mike closed his eyes for a moment, "I've never heard someone screaming like that… she yelled at them, screaming for them to stop. She just kept crying and screaming, but they didn't listen. The entire jail was shaking, Richie… shaking. I didn't understand what was happening, I thought the volcano was about to erupt, and the earth was quaking from that. They brought me outside as quickly as possible after that."

"It was her." Richie squinted.

"Yeah, it was." Mike nodded his head, "I was brought to the volcano… we walked that path lit with the torches, and I thought for sure I was a goner. It was near the top of the volcano when I heard all this screaming from behind me. I didn't know what was happening until she showed up. Her eyes were glowing red, and her nose was bleeding. I didn't really have time to think before the guards holding me in front of the volcano were thrown from my side.

She threw them into the volcano with just her mind, Richie… it was amazing." Mike explained.

"I got there just after that I take it." Richie looked at him.

Mike nodded, "She looked like she was about to collapse, but she was determined to tell the high priest to let us leave, but he wouldn't. I admit, I could have taken him myself, but I was shocked… I've never seen someone do what she did. She's… got to be some sort of… goddess or something…"

"Maybe she really is a goddess… or at the very least a demi-goddess. Human's don't come equipped with those abilities. Even alchemists rely on science." Richie nodded his head.

"Anyway… she wants to help. That's a really good thing." Mike looked at Richie seriously.

"She seems to be really close with you after just knowing you for a day. I think it's best you help teach her what she needs to know and guide her." Richie told Mike honestly, "I'm happy to have her on the crew."

"We should really talk about a new name… she can't just be 'that girl' on the ship…" Mike said thoughtfully.

"That's true, you're going to need something to scream in bed later." Richie said with a deadpan expression.

Mike didn't even look as he smacked Richie upside the head, "Asshole." Richie couldn't help but burst into uncontrollable laughter as Mike wandered off just as the orange glow of the sun peaked over the horizon.

"Hey Mike," Richie looked over at him smiling.

"What?" Mike looked back at him wearily.

"Wanna help me with something?" Richie grinned deviously as Mike looked at him curiously.

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“Are you FUCKING kidding me?! WHO DID THIS!” Stan angrily shouted from the hallway as Mike Wheeler and Richie Tozier started laughing uncontrollably from the deck of the ship later on that morning.

Stan emerged from the lower part of the ship with various flower petals in his hair to see the entire crew aside from Mike Hanlon staring at them, “Which one of you rigged a bucket to dump flower petals all over me the moment I opened the door?!” Stan looked around annoyed.

“Happy deflowering!” Richie grinned brightly before Beverly came by with Georgie, tossing more flowers at him.

Stan went three shades of red before running back below deck to lock himself in his and Mike Hanlon’s room. Mike Wheeler, and Richie couldn’t stop laughing with the rest of the crew at that point.

Will looked to Richie, happy to see him smiling, and laughing. “I’m hungry…” Will said to Richie once Stan fled the scene.

Richie looked to Will, “Yeah me too. Georgie, what did you make today?” Richie looked to the younger boy fondly.

Georgie smiled happily, “I made eggs, I made some fresh nut bread, and I made something new to try…” Georgie listed off a few of the things.

“Something new?” Nancy Wheeler looked at him a little bit nervously, “What would that something new be?”

“I call them fish cakes.” Georgie explained looking up at Bill proudly, “They’re a mixture of the fish caught, potatoes, and other ingredients I use to make biscuits.”

“That sounds good.” Holly Wheeler smiled brightly, her angelic eyes and hair illuminating in the sunshine of the deck.

Georgie smiled, but avoided eye contact, to which Bill couldn’t help but smile, “Let’s go have some of your fish cakes.” Bill said patting his shoulder as they headed to the dining hall.

It looked to everyone that Georgie had already set out everything for breakfast prior to them gathering on the deck. The new girl sat next to Mike at the table, she was quiet, and didn't seem to have anything to talk about unless someone asked her a question. "So… can we name her?" Richie asked suddenly.

Mike kicked Richie's foot under the table, "What? She needs a name." Richie pointed out.

The girl looked around the table, her doe eyes taking everyone in, "What name?" She asked quietly.

"Any ideas?" Richie looked around the table.

Mike Hanlon walked in with a big smile on his face while Stan walked in behind him looking annoyed as they sat down together. "What about Annabelle?" Beverly suggested.

"Seraphine." Max spoke up next.

Eddie and Bill looked at one another trying to come up with a name, "Sonia?" Bill smirked watching Eddie elbow him.

"Not cool." Eddie leered at him for a moment before Eddie spoke, "Catherine?"

"Wait, who's Sonia?" Richie asked.

"My mother… she's the one who sold me into slavery when I told her I wanted to travel the world, and refused to stay home." Eddie looked annoyed as he spoke.

"Bitch… we're not naming her after your mother then, no matter how hot your mom must be." Richie added as Eddie hurled an apple at Richie's head.

"Bridgette!" Lucas suggested.

"Magnolia?" Nancy spoke up after a second.

The girl made a face at all the names, "There's lots of names. Morgan, Sarah, Lydia, Jane, Li-" Dustin started naming some of them off.

“Jane.” The girl spoke fondly.

“That’s the name you like?” Mike Wheeler asked her, looking over her with curious dark eyes only for the girl to nod as she bit into a fish cake before anyone else had a chance to try one.

“Mm… good.” She looked over to Georgie who smiled brightly.

Everyone else decided it was time to try what Georgie made. If Jane liked the fish cakes, then they couldn’t be that bad. Nancy tried hers, and looked over at Georgie with a surprised expression, “This is really good… I’ll have to show you more recipes.” She told him.

Steve looked over at Nancy, “So, you cook?”

“Yes, of course I cook. It’s a skill everyone should have.” Nancy Wheeler spoke honestly, “Why do you look so surprised.

“You can use a gun and you can cook. You might be the perfect woman.” Steve said with a grin on his face.

Nancy rolled her eyes with a smile, “Men.”

“Tell me about it.” Max nodded to her.

“Hey! What’s that supposed to mean?” Lucas piped up as he chewed his fish cake.

Max closed his mouth, pressing on his chin, “You’re all pigs.” She said looking into his eyes.

“I’m not.” Will looked alarmed.

“Not you, sweetie, she means the men with masculinity issues.” Beverly said quickly to Will.

“Masculinity issues?!” Steve looked wide eyed, “Since when do I have those?!”

“Masculinity is a fragile thing. They tell me I can’t wear a dress, but I say I have great legs, I SHOULD wear a dress.” Richie spoke up, pounding his fist on the table, making Will giggle.

“See, Richie isn’t afraid that something ‘girly’ is going to ruin his image, he just owns it.” Beverly said looking over at Richie fondly.

“Yeah, Lucas, you’re too sensitive about being manly.” Dustin looked over at Max, sliding a little closer to her, “Me on the other hand-”

“Yeah, that’s not going to happen.” Max looked at him sternly.

Dustin sighed, and sat back in his chair, “Right.”

Will ate two of the fish cakes Georgie made, feeling quite pleased to try something new. Richie looked at Will, smiling softly, “How is it?”

“It’s good. Georgie knows how to make good food.” Will smiled, “So how close are we to West Shire Island?”

“Well, according to my calculations we should be there within the next three hours.” Stanley spoke up finally.

“Perfect. I’m glad to see you aren’t too butt hurt to eat with us.” Richie winked at Stan.

“Please, if he’s butt hurt it isn’t from you, Richie.” Mike Wheeler spoke up surprising nearly everyone.

“You’re not any funnier than your cousin.” Stan snapped forking food into his mouth.

Richie lifted his hand for a high five, to which Mike reluctantly gave him. “Good job, Wheeler.”

“Yeah, yeah.” Mike smiled, glancing at Jane as she continued to eat a lot more than she looked like she could handle.

Will was eating more than usual, his plate consisting of a normal amount of food in Richie’s opinion. “It’s nice to see you eating more.” Richie told him quietly.

Looking up at Richie, he smiled a little, “Thanks. I’ve been trying to indulge a little more… I really want to get past this training…”

“You’re doing so good.” Richie smiled at him, “I’m really proud of

you."

Will looked so happy just having the compliment Richie gave him, "Thank you… it means a lot coming from you."

Richie looked into Will's hazel eyes, spotting admiration before he turned to grab an apple.

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Docking on West Shire Island, Mike Wheeler helped Jane put a shawl on over her head to hide her lack of hair. The last thing he wanted was people staring at Jane, making her uncomfortable. Richie thought this was incredibly thoughtful of his cousin.

Will immediately went to his mother's house, knocking on the door, only to be wrapped up in her warm arms again. They had been gone for about three days, so that evening would have given the people enough time to get ready for their vote. "You made it back in one piece." Hopper said looking both Richie and his cousin over.

"That we did. We're ready to hear from your people. We've got a lot more good news since returning." Richie informed him.

"We could use some." Hopper said before looking around, "I'll go tell everyone to come to the meeting tonight. For now, I guess just take it easy."

"Aye aye." Richie said before looking around, unsure of what to do next.

Wandering back to the ship, Richie sat on the edge of the ship facing the water. The wind blew through his dark locks, making him feel relaxed to just be alive and well. Glancing over his shoulder, he spotted Eddie Kaspbrak and Bill Denbrough walking onto the ship together. They were laughing, talking about something that Richie couldn't quite hear. Looking at them from afar though, he could read their body language. They were happy around one another. Bill smiled so much more than usual, and Eddie seemed to be totally enamoured by the tall slender man. It was only a matter of time before the two started showing their feelings for one another more

publicly, it made Richie feel happy that people were being brought together on the ship.

The bitter sweetness of watching others getting together on the ship made him think of Zachary. The way they used to lie in bed together in the early mornings before Zachary was to start his morning cleaning of the hallway floors. Richie would massage his muscles every night before bed, kissing him all over until they inevitably broke into passionate sex before bed. He missed the way his dead lover tasted when they kissed one another, but more than anything, he missed the way it felt holding his body close when they slept. They were so happy together and Richie even had plans to run away one day to another island where no one would stop them from being together. It was a big part of the reason things needed to change. Love wasn't meant to be broken by people who had nothing to do with the relationship itself.

Pulling the cord that hung from his neck out from under his shirt, Richie looked at the small rock that hung from it. The rock was known as pyrite, or fool's gold. It had been smoothed out and shaped into a heart before being attached to a leather cord, all done by Zachary himself. Richie had been happy to receive the gift on one of his birthday's. It had been the best gift he'd ever received. "It's a gold heart, to match yours." Zachary smiled, his freckled cheeks, and caramel coloured hair still stood out in his mind, along with those big blue eyes.

Richie closed his eyes, feeling the heart that he normally kept hidden from others. He felt the heaviness in his chest, knowing it would feel that heavy forever. "Richie?" A familiar voice called to him, breaking him from his thoughts.

Hiding the necklace once again down his shirt, Richie looked back at Will who was staring at him curiously, "What are you doing here? I thought you were catching up with your mother?"

"I was, but I wanted to see if you wanted to take a walk with me around the island? My mom says theirs a pond somewhere in the forest that has lily pads and water lilies. I've never seen lilies or lily pads before. She says they're beautiful." Will told him with a soft smile.

Looking at Will's excited face, Richie couldn't help but smile, "You seriously have never seen those?"

Will shook his head, "I wanted you to see them with me!"

"Well, alright." Richie chuckled before getting off the edge of the boat to head off the dock with Will next to him.

Something about Will's energy was relieving to Richie. The fact that he was always exuding a selfless kindness made him a wonderful person to spend time with. "What were you doing alone on the ship, anyway?" Will asked.

"Oh, I just started thinking about things." Richie shook his head, trying to be casual without giving the truth away.

"You looked miles away, must have been something good." Will smiled as he pushed some branches out of his way as they headed into the woods.

Richie decided to change the subject, "So how far out is this pond anyway?"

"I don't really know, my mom said it's close. She says she used to bring me there all the time when I was a baby. Apparently, it used to calm me when I'd start crying." Will told him as he looked around.

"It must be strange coming back here for you… you don't remember it." Richie reasoned.

"It's a bit strange, but I'm happy to be here. It's something I never would have had without your help." Will looked at him fondly, "You saved me." Will looked back at him as he continued to walk, only to trip over a log as he wasn't watching where he was stepping. "Oof!"

Richie moved to Will's side quickly, pulling him back onto his feet easily. "Hey, I know I'm handsome, but you need to watch your safety first." Richie smirked.

Will blushed, smiling as he did so, "I do need to be more careful I suppose…" Looking around, Will and Richie realized they made it to the pond.

Approaching the pond's edge, Will peered into the mass of water, spotting the lilies and floating lily pads. "That's them?!" Will looked bright eyed and excited.

Richie looked at him with a smile, "Yeah. They're nice, right?"

Will looked back at him, smiling, "I want to go touch it."

"Don't fall in." Richie smiled as Will headed into the pond, kneeling down to run his fingers over the lily pad before carefully touching the lilies beside it.

"Wow…" Will smiled, "These are really beautiful… we didn't have these in Pavlovia…"

"Did you have any flowers there?" Richie asked curiously as he found himself sitting on the log Will previously tripped over.

Will looked over, nodding at him, "Yeah, we had these long purple flowers there… a lot of us made dye out of them and then we'd dye different silks we got from trading with Grenada Kingdom. We'd resell the silks at a higher price after they were dyed." Will informed Richie calmly.

"That could be good business information for you guys when you move back there." Richie told him as he glanced up at the tree tops.

"Move back?" Will looked up at Richie, his calm suddenly gone.

Richie looked at him, "Yeah… when your family moves there, you're staying with them, right?"

Will shook his head, "I… well… I guess if you'd prefer…" Will let go of the plants, standing up, clasping his hands in front of him.

Richie looked him over, "Will, I'm about to go off into a big war… you'd be stupid to come with me. I don't really know who all is going to live or die. Anyone on the crew might not even make it alive, and a lot of them know it. I want you to have a chance at life. You never got that chance before… and even if I lose, you'd still have it better than you would have."

Will's eyes were averted, and Richie could tell Will wasn't impressed with the idea, "Of course… I should have thought of that… I… I wouldn't be much help in battle… I can't kill…" Will's shoulders were tense.

Richie looked at him softly, "You're really important to me, Will. You have turned out to be my best friend, and I can't stand the idea of you getting taken down on the battle field because of a lack of fighting skill." Richie stood up, approaching him slowly, "I'm doing this for you, I hope you get it."

Will nodded, "Yeah, I get it." Will said looking at Richie solemnly. "I…. should get back home, my mom wanted me to have dinner with her."

Richie knew it was an excuse to get away from him, but he nodded anyway, "Yeah… I'll see you tonight at the meeting?"

"Of course." Will nodded before heading off without looking back.

Richie looked down into the pond for a moment. He sighed, leaning down to pick up a lily from the water, severing its stem before he walked back to the ship with it in hand.

Notes for the Chapter:

How did you feel about this chapter?

11. Drunk and Disorderly

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie continues on his journey to saving the world, but not before drinking a little too much one night.

Chapter 11

After speaking of the victory on Stavros Island, and the complete obliteration of the island itself, the people of West Shire were feeling what Richie was saying. When Jane demonstrated her abilities, the people of West Shire Island were even more on board with the move to Pavlovia. The vote was unanimous, everyone wanted to leave the island in search for a better life.

Everyone piled onto the ships, ready to set sale by dawn on the day Richie said they were to set sail. Many of the people looked back at the island fondly before the ships pulled away from West Shire Island, leaving the place completely abandoned. The first stop was set to be at an island called Ashryn. It was also a poorly populated island, but it had some of the best pear trees traders could find, on top of that, it was a lush piece of land that had potential should people decide to seek out new places to live.

Will opted to travel on the second crew's ship with his mom and his brother. He hadn't spoken much to Richie since Richie told him he was going to leave Will in Pavlovia. It wasn't as though Richie blamed him for being angry, but he missed Will, and knew they didn't have much time left before he would set off from Pavlovia.

Richie was in a drunken state by nightfall of the third night at sea. He was dancing around the deck of the ship, singing along with Dustin, Lucas, and Steve as they made one of their many performances. The following morning, he was regretting it when he woke up with a splitting headache as they docked on Ashryn Island.

Without much thought about his appearance, Richie climbed off the ship after inhaling two bread rolls at breakfast. The crews decided to make good on the trade market by stocking up with plenty of food to

hold them over until they reached Luvos Island.

Will made his appearance in the marketplace as he looked over a few stands by himself. Richie made his way over, placing both hands over Will's eyes from behind him. "Guess who?"

"Hi Richie." Will said before Richie pulled his hands away, and they faced each other.

"You still pissed?" Richie asked him.

Will shook his head, "No… I mean… I get it. You're just looking out for me."

Richie looked at him, "Are you going to come back to my ship tonight, or are you going to stay with your family?"

"You sound like you miss me." Will said pointedly.

"I never said I didn't." Richie crossed his arms, "You missed a great time the other night. The bards were performing for us and everyone got hammered."

"Was that you singing loudly the other night incoherently?" Will looked at him a little amused.

"It may have been…" Richie laughed a bit, watching Will crack a real smile for once.

"Alright… I'll stay on the ship tonight, just don't think I'm ok with these plans of yours. I'm going to really miss you." Will said to him honestly.

Richie nodded, "I'll miss you too."

Will and Richie hugged, and it felt good just to hold the smaller man again. His hair smelt like the jasmine petals they had gotten a while back for bathing in. When they let go of each other, Richie reached around Will's back, grabbing the ponytail that hung down to his mid back. "Are you ever going to cut this off?"

"I've never really thought about it…" Will said honestly.

Richie smiled, “I’ll cut it tonight.”

“Oh, you two made up. That’s cute.” Max teased as she walked over to the table they were at picking up some fishing lures before paying for them.

“Shut it, Mad Max.” Richie smiled at her, “Don’t you have two boys who both want in your pants on the ship?”

“Oh probably, but the problem is, I just don’t care.” Max said before heading off with a smile on her face.

Richie couldn’t help but laugh, “Hey Will, have you ever tried a pear before?”

“A pear? No. We only ate chicken on special occasions, but we had vegetables like celery most of the time and drank only water in Pavlovia.” Will told him.

“You have to try a pear, they’re amazing.” Richie pulled Will along by the arm, leading him to a stand where they seemed to have a good stock of them. “Two pears please.” Richie said sliding gold coins across the table.

The older woman behind the table took the gold, nodding for Richie to pick his pears. Richie grabbed two before heading off with Will, handing him one to try. “Is it like an apple?” Will asked wondering how he was supposed to eat it.

“Very similar, you just bite into it.” Richie said before taking a bite of his.

Will bit into the pear before chewing it. His eyes lit up as he swallowed, “Richie… this is the best fruit I’ve ever had…”

“You like them? We can buy a bunch more, and maybe you can replant them on Pavlovia?” Richie suggested.

Will nodded, “I’d like that.” Will began eating the rest of the pear quickly, licking the juices from his fingers.

Richie pulled Ben Hanscom aside, giving him the order to buy a

bunch of pears before handing him his thickest gold chain around his neck to trade with. “Richie… that was a big gold chain…” Will looked surprised.

“I know, but my cabin boy deserves the best of the best.” Richie smiled wrapping an arm around Will’s shoulders as they headed deeper through the market together.

They spent a good part of the day venturing around Ashryn Island. Richie managed to speak to the leader of Ashryn Island. The leader of the place was an elderly woman with the personality of a wise grandmother. He asked her specifically what changes she wished to see for her community and most of it related to the trade being so low since Valora Kingdom stopped trade with them. Richie told her if he was successful, the woman would notice a big boost in their trade within at least two years depending. Richie wanted to talk to her more, but he knew she had things to do.

That evening on the boat, everyone discussed what hairstyle Will should have. It seemed Will himself had little say in it as he sat on the stool listening to their discussion. After a bit, Beverly took the scissors from Richie, and began cutting long wispy bangs in the front of his hair. Towards the back, his hair was styled to flare out nicely. Once she was done, Will looked around. Everyone nodding approvingly, “He looks really nice.” Mike Wheeler nodded.

“Back off, Wheeler.” Richie winked at him.

Will has handed a large hand mirror, “Oh… wow…” He looked himself over before smiling at Beverly, “Thank you, this does look nice.”

“It’s practical too. You can pull it back if its too much in your face.” Beverly then added, “Also someone could easily grab onto it if you’re having a bit of fun on those late nights in Pavlovia.” A few people laughed as Will blushed a bit, handing her mirror back.

Richie felt a bit of a pang in his chest at the thought of someone pulling Will’s hair, thrusting into him from behind. He decided he needed to stop being so protective of his best friend and let him have a little fun if he wanted to.

“I… don’t think that will be happening… but thank you.” Will said before getting up, collecting his long ponytail from the ground, looking it over for a moment.

“Alright, everyone should probably get to bed. We have to get sailing to Luvos tomorrow morning.” Richie reminded, watching the crew grumble before heading off.

Will looked at Richie, still holding his hair in his hands, “I guess we should get to bed too.”

Richie nodded, walking with Will to the cabin. Will left his hair nearby, not sure whether to throw it away, or keep it for sentimental purposes. Richie pulled off his boots, getting into the bed comfortably. “This journey we’re on now… I’m enjoying it.” Will said as he took his own boots off before climbing into bed next to Richie.

“I bet you are. It’s nice to see some of these places you’ve never been.” Richie commented with a yawn.

“Yeah. I can’t wait to see what’s on Luvos.” Will said lying on his side, curled into the blankets.

“I guess we’ll both be in for a surprise.” Richie smiled, his eyes closed as he laid on his back.

“Mmm…” Will agreed before falling asleep moments before Richie did.

***

By late evening several days later, Richie’s crew of three boats docked on Luvos Island. The people there seemed a bit leery of them. Richie could see why, they might have looked threatening to the average person.

The group headed to the market, looking around an hour before it was set to close down. Richie sent word to the people of the market that he was interested in speaking with the leader of the island. He could only hope that by the following day they’d be able to meet.

“What are you, my stalker now?” Max shouted at Lucas as they

ventured through the market.

“I’m not stalking you, I’m trying to shop, just like you.” Lucas shouted back.

“Oh dear… lovers quarrel.” Richie said to Will amused as he watched the scene unfold while they sat on the edge of the ship.

“Stalker!” Max said before venturing deeper into the market, out of Richie’s earshot.

Will smiled, staring out at the sun that was beginning to set in the horizon. “I was hoping we’d get here sooner.” Richie told Will, “Like hours sooner…”

“That just means we’ll have all tomorrow to enjoy the island.” Will reasoned.

“Tonight though, there’s nothing to do…” Richie sighed, taking his hat off his head.

Will looked up at him, enjoying his dark locks, “Well… we could always celebrate with the bards? They love playing their music.”

“We could… hopefully we are graced with a crew that has remembered to get more wine, and ale.” Richie said as most of his crew was in the market place together.

“Those two look like they’re in love…” Will pointed to Ben and Beverly who were walking close together as they looked over the stands of goods.

“Ben has always liked Beverly ever since I can recall. Even before he joined my crew. I think she’s the entire reason he left home to join.” Richie nodded a bit.

“What were their lives like before you came into the picture?” Will questioned.

“I found Beverly and Max together. They were new girls working in a brothel. I just walked in there without thinking much about it, and announced that I needed abled bodies working on my ship and both

Max and Beverly joined up." Richie said with a shrug, "As for Ben, he worked with his folks, his father was a blacksmith. I went to his shop with Beverly and Max along with the crew I'd pulled together on short notice and asked for some weapons. Then I asked if Ben wanted something more out of life. Once he knew Beverly was coming with me, he was on board. Ben had a good understanding of carpentry, so we just let him be the ship carpenter. I don't regret anything about how that worked out."

"Does she like him as well?" Will questioned.

"Yeah. I think at first, she was more interested in Bill Denbrough, but over time, she saw how sweet and kind Ben was. She inspired him to start exercising more and lifting heavier things. He's a lot less pudgy than when I first met him. Still a good-looking man." Richie nodded.

Will smiled, "What about Mike Hanlon, where did you pick him up?"

"He was actually the stable boy at the castle. His parents had died when he was young, so he was bound to be working the stables his whole life had I not taken him on my crew. As for Bill and Georgie, they were desperately trying to find someone to take them on as crew, but no one wanted Georgie with his missing hand. I didn't see why he wouldn't fit in, so I took Georgie and Bill with me. I got Georgie his hook shortly after I found out I lost Zachary. It felt good to give him something that might give him confidence. He uses it in battle even… it's been good for him." Richie said looking out at the small boy as he followed Holly Wheeler around the market, carrying her things for her.

Richie and Will both turned their attention to Steve who was flirting with Nancy. She seemed to be enjoying herself as he slipped a flower behind her ear before shoving him away playfully. "Everyone seems so happy on your crew." Will commented.

"I hope it lasts." Richie said, a hint of worry in his voice.

Will rubbed Richie's arm gently, "Even if it doesn't, they're happy now… Everyone deserves happiness, no matter how fleeting it can be for some of us."

“What do you think it’ll be like when we get to Pavlovia?” Richie looked at Will seriously.

“I think… the slavers will do everything they can to keep their business running. We’ve had attacks in the past by pirates, but never a crew this big. The pirates often gave up or died trying. Back then, I was happy the pirates didn’t win, I was under the impression I’d die or worse.” Will explained.

“How do you think the slaves will adjust once they’re free?” Richie questioned.

“Probably about as well as I did depending how long they’ve been on Pavlovia. There’s a lot of babies raised there… so they’re as brainwashed as I was.” Will admitted.

Richie nodded his head, “I was afraid you’d say that… hopefully they adjust more positively and don’t think they’re still slaves.”

“It takes a long time to break from that mindset… we’re raised to believe that even if we’re told we’re free, it’s a test.” Will explained, “That’s why it took me a while to stop calling you ‘master’.”

“I won’t lie… I kind of liked it.” Richie grinned at him.

Will rolled his eyes with a smile, “You really are dirty like they say.”

“They?” Richie looked at Will alarmed.

“Your cousin for one, the girls as well. They say it to your face.” Will laughed a bit.

“Well they’re right.” Richie laughed, “You wanna get drunk tonight?”

“Sure.” Will laughed, “I just want to make sure I don’t have a terrible hang over, so how many cups should I stop at?”

“Three probably.” Richie advised.

Will nodded, “Three and no more.”

***

By five cups in, Will was having a hard time walking along the deck of the ship. The music and singing making it even harder for Will to retain any balance. Richie laughed, wrapping an arm around his waist, “I told you not to keep drinking, Will… you don’t listen.” Richie told him slurring his words.

“I want to swim…” Will told Richie, a smile permanently etched onto his face.

“No, you can’t swim… it’s dangerous at night… especially drunk.” Richie said, spilling wine from his cup as he swung his free arm around animatedly as hey headed towards the lower deck.

Bill had Eddie pinned against their cabin door, the two of them kissing furiously. “Aye! Get into your cabin! There’s young ones on board!” Richie reminded.

Bill and Eddie pulled apart, panting heavily as Bill opened the door that Eddie was leaning on, causing Eddie to crash down to the ground before giggling cutely. Richie shook his head, opening his cabin door.

“I’m a good swimmer, I learned on Pavlovia, and I was the best slave swimmer on the island for a whole year.” Will told Richie before finishing the remaining wine from his cup.

“Oh yeah?” Richie looked at him closing the door behind them as Will made his way to the table, stumbling the entire way.

“Yeah, I was good at a lot of things. Cleaning, reading, writing, and even gardening.” Will smiled proudly as Richie fell into his chair before Will.

Richie scoffed, “Bet you were cock sucker of the year too.” Richie teased jokingly before he cracked open a bottle of wine from on top of his table before taking a drink straight from the bottle

“I was good at that too…” Will nodded his head, making Richie choke, spewing the wine all over the table, and Will.

“Hey!” Will complained, looking at his arms before wiping his face.

“You sucked dicks? You? WHAT?!” Richie stared at him wide eyed.

“Yeah, it’s part of the training….” Will said as if it was common sense.

“Fuck that, they shouldn’t have made you do that…” Richie grumbled, instantly in a bad mood at the thought.

“I’m over it.” Will shook his head, “Besides, maybe it’s a skill that’s worthwhile knowing…”

“While that’s a true statement, I don’t think you should have been forced into that… that’s terrible…” Richie looked at Will sympathetically, “Did you at least get a blow job out of it?” Richie asked, totally not thinking about the fact that slaves didn’t get those luxuries.

“No, I was a slave.” Will reminded shaking his head, “Why does this bother you so much? I’m fine with it.”

“I wouldn’t be!” Richie said as Will stole the bottle from his hands, taking a drink from it.

“I got to choose which trainer I gave it to for my final assessment at least.” Will shrugged.

“Still, if I was you, I’d have been demanding recepri…recipi…. What ever! Where they give it back!” Richie said slurring angrily.

“Reciprocation? Yeah, slaves didn’t have that option.” Will explained.

“Well would you have wanted a blowjob?” Richie asked.

“I mean… most people I think would say yes.” Will said shrugging, “Doesn’t mean it was going to happen.”

“Ok, come on…” Richie pulled Will over to the bed, “It’s time…”

“What?” Will looked at him confused, “You’re joking.”

“Nope, it’s time.” Richie said sitting Will down on the bed, pulling down his shorts carefully as he sat on his knees in front of Will.

Will swallowed, his erection forming immediately, “Richie… you don’t have to…”

“No… my cabin boy deserves the best of the best so… here’s the closest thing you’re going to get to that on this fucking ship…” Richie said before leaning in, taking the head of Will’s erection in his mouth.

Will gasped quickly, his eyes rolling back as his head lolled backwards at the feeling of a wet mouth around his erection. Richie bobbed his head smoothly, allowing Will to touch the back of his throat several times as he sucked hard on him.

“OH God! Oh my God!” Will’s arms were shaking as they attempted to hold him upright.

Richie gripped his hip, holding Will still as he continued sucking him off with as much focus as drunken Richie could hold. Will’s arms gave out, sending Will onto his back on the mattress. His loud moaning was definitely going to alert the crew as to what was going on, but Richie didn’t care; Will deserved a blowjob after all the head he had to give on Pavlovia.

“Richie… oh my God!” Will gripped the bedding on either side of his head.

“Oh yes! Yes!” It took Richie maybe five minutes of blowing Will before he felt Will shoot into the back of his throat.

Swallowing, Richie then sat up, taking a drink from the bottle in his hands, “Tada!” He said as if he just performed a magic trick; to Will it basically was.

Will panted heavily, “Oh… fuck…”

“Was it good?” Richie asked.

“Yes! Why would you even need to ask?!” Will looked at him like he was nuts.

Richie helped pull Will’s shorts back up to where they needed to be. “There you go, now you can go through life knowing you have blown and been blown.”

Will couldn't help but laugh at how crazy everything was. "Richie… you just sucked my dick…"

Richie laughed, "I know… wouldn't be the first dick I've sucked so don't worry about it."

Will was laughing uncontrollably, his eyes tearing up and his face going red as he rolled onto his side, laughing hard, "What ship captain does that?!"

"The best ship captain." Richie smirked before he climbed onto the bed next to him.

"No ship captain gives their cabin boy a blowjob." Will said between laughs.

"Pfft, those ship captains aren't living the dream." Richie said with a smile as he closed his eyes.

Will wiped his eyes, "Thank you though… I think I'm supposed to thank you after that… I still can't believe you did that…" Will rolled over, facing Richie, "Did you want one too?"

Richie's eyes were closed, and he couldn't stop smiling, "No way… I'm not making my cabin boy suck my dick… what would be weird…" Richie then broke into the giggles.

Will stared over at him, laughing at how drunk Richie was, "You won't even remember this tomorrow will you?"

"Fuck I hope so…" Richie said, "That was a nice smooth dick…"

"Oh my God…" Will covered his face, rolling over onto his other side.

The snoring from behind him let him know that Richie was out for the count. Rolling back over to face Richie, Will stared at him for a long time. After a moment, he leaned in, pressing his lips to Richie's. The raven-haired man didn't stir. Will snuggled into Richie's side, letting sleep take him next.

To Will, it felt like he'd just closed his eyes when the sun cam

beaming in at him from the damn hole in the curtains. Will groaned into Richie's neck. "What did I do…" Richie groaned, "I feel sick…."

"You drank too much… so did I…" Will said, "I need the bucket…" Will complained as he rolled away from Richie, grabbing the empty bucket he used last time to vomit into.

"Oh fuck…" Richie jumped up, running to the deck before he began throwing up over the side of the boat that faced out towards the water. "Damn it…" Richie groaned, feeling his head.

Will didn't know if Richie remembered the night before, but he didn't want to spoil anything between them by bringing it up. He chose to act normal for the rest of the day as the two of them laid in bed, recovering from the night before.

A knock at the cabin door broke them from their sleep. "What?!" Richie called out.

"It's the leader of Luvos, he's outside willing to meet with you." Mike Wheeler told him through the door.

"Fuck…" Richie forgot about that as he sat up, attempting to straighten himself out in front of the mirror before rinsing his mouth out with wine, and spitting it into the bucket Will was using previously.

He walked out of the cabin, his cousin raking his eyes over Richie for a moment, "Way to be a world leader…" Mike said to him quietly.

"Shove it right up your ass, Wheeler." Richie said quickly before heading down to the docks.

A fair skinned man with feathery brown hair nodded to Richie and introduced himself. Richie talked to him for a while, asking about the state of the island and questioning him on what Luvos could use in the future should Richie become a leader. It seemed things were running smoothly in Luvos, but the Island of Ibithos that was between the three kingdoms got far more trade than they did. Richie offered to help fix that in the future.

By mid afternoon, Richie's crew finished up with their trading in the

market place. Everyone who wasn't too hung over gathered on the deck of the ship. They were all teasing Richie the moment Max threw flower petals at him. "Why are you tossing those at me? Eddie and Bill were the ones fucking last night. Not me." Richie scoffed at her.

"Oh, they got theirs this morning, but you… we know what you were up to. Don't lie." Max said to him.

Richie scoffed, "I don't know what you're on about."

"Oh… oh God! Richie!" Beverly moaned teasingly, "That's the sounds your little cabin boy was making late last night."

Richie looked at her dumbfounded, "What?"

"You seriously don't remember?" Bev stared at him wide eyed watching him shake his head; Richie of all people would have no logical reason to lie.

"Oh my God… you better talk to him…" Beverly pointed to the doorway leading to the lower level of the ship.

Richie got up immediately, heading down to his cabin. Will was still curled up in the bed, blankets surrounding him. "Uh… Will?" Richie asked awkwardly.

"Mmm?" Will opened his eyes, looking up at Richie, "What's wrong?"

"Um… Do you remember… anything from last night?" Richie asked.

Will looked at him, "You don't?"

"…No." Richie said honestly, feeling a bit worried.

"It's ok, Richie… you were really drunk, and you insisted on giving me a blowjob… that's all that happened." Will informed him.

"I didn't pressure you into anything you didn't want to, did I?" Richie asked nervously.

"No, of course not. It's fine, everything is ok." Will assured him.

Richie breathed a sigh of relief, “Well… I mean… I guess it had been sort of on my mind all this time but… I didn’t think I’d act on it…” Richie said not knowing the reasoning he’d given Will the night before.

Will looked at him furrowing his brows, “Really? I thought you just blew me because you found out I’ve done it before to others in my training.”

Richie went a bit pale as he realized he had been caught, “Well… I… mean… you’re my best friend, and… I have a bit of a track record with doing stuff with my closest friends…”

Will looked at him for a minute, “That’s alright.” Will didn’t question anything, he felt he got all he needed to know out of the discussion, “Did you just want to forget about it?”

“I’ve already forgotten about it, I can’t remember anything.” Richie admitted.

“Ok.” Will nodded, not sure how he should feel.

“Mind if I come lie down for a bit longer?” Richie smiled sheepishly.

“You are the captain, so you make the rules.” Will smiled a little, closing his eyes.

Richie climbed into bed, closing his eyes. On the inside, he was cursing himself for forgetting everything. That was one memory he would have liked to have kept. He let out a soft sigh. At least it happened at all.

Notes for the Chapter:

> If you have any thoughts or feelings, leave those babies here.

12. The Cure

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie's crew find themselves on Montiva Island to speak to the leader. To their horror, the leader of Montiva is dying, and only the cure will save him. Richie and his crew search for just that.

Chapter 12

Travelling the Island of Montiva had been a shorter distance that travelling from Ashryn to Luvos. Montiva was beautiful to say the least. Palm trees grew to great heights, and the water was crystal clear on their beaches. Many of the men and women on the island were dark skinned, like Mike Hanlon and Lucas Sinclair.

Richie noticed the biggest selling item on the market was coconuts. Mike Hanlon sat on the beach with Stan straddling his lap. The two of them kissing lovingly as many people on the island stared; they weren't used to seeing a fair skinned male and a dark-skinned male together in such a way. They didn't seem to mind but it was definitely new for them.

"Stan, Mike… you're making a scene here." Steve told them as he laid on his back a few feet away, sun bathing along side Bev, Max and Nancy.

"We're not making a scene, we're just kissing." Stan snapped.

"If people want to watch, I don't mind." Mike smirked before pressing his lips back to Stan's.

Richie couldn't help but laugh at the banter as he and Will ventured past them to head into the market place. Mike Wheeler was attempting to take Jane shopping, she took her time staring at the items on the table fondly, without making an actual selection.

Holding up something curiously, Jane looked at Mike Wheeler for answers, "That's an earring." He said looking at the gold hoop with a

few beads through it.

“I like it.’ She said quickly.

“You want that? You don’t have ear piercings.” Mike reasoned with her as Richie came up to them.

“I can pierce your ear for you, but it will hurt.” Richie informed her watching her shrug.

“Alright… I’ll buy it.” Mike handed the vendor some gold before Jane pushed over a matching earring. “Two? Ok.” Mike put down more gold before pocketing the earrings.

Richie looked at Will, “What about you? Want an earring?”

Will smiled, “I don’t think I’d look good with one.”

“I think you would.” Richie smiled, “If you don’t want to withstand the pain though, I understand.”

“Pain isn’t the issue, don’t worry.” Will told him.

“Your golden-haired friend on the beach…” The vendor selling fish spoke up, “Is he for sale? How much for him or his time?” the man asked nodding to Stan who was still locking lips with Mike Hanlon.

“He’s not for sale, no… fuck that would only inflate his ego…” Richie wiped his forehead before leaning closer to his cousin, “Go tell Stan to knock it off, he’s got people looking for his body.” Richie said before Mike pulled Jane along with him as they held hands.

Richie looked to the man, “Could I speak to the leader of this island by chance?”

“Our leader is very sick… but I will tell him you wish to speak to him.” The fish vendor nodded.

“Thank you, that’s helpful.” Richie nodded looking to Will, “Anything you want here?”

Will looked down at the vending table… “Which earring do you think

I should get?"

Richie smiled a little and looked through them before he picked up a gold hoop with a red ruby hanging from it. "This one." Richie said eyeing Will.

"What? That's got to cost a fortune." Will shook his head.

"It's beautiful isn't it?" Richie asked.

"Yes, but…" Will was interrupted.

"How much for it?" Richie asked.

Will was right, it was expensive, but Richie took a gold chain from his neck, and a ring from his finger to pay for it. "Richie… that's too much." Will looked at him.

"No way." Richie said before collecting the earring and walking them back to the boat one he handed it to Will.

Looking it over, Will realized he actually owned something of value for once.

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During the evening, was when the ear-piercing extravaganza took place on the deck of the ship. Richie pierced Jane's left ear first, inserting her new gold earing into the hole. She did nothing more than flinch as the needle pierced her ears. Finally, she was adorned with two gold hoops, with three beads each. It went with her spikey hair that was growing back.

Richie looked to Will next, "Are you sure you want me to do this?"

Will smiled a little, "I can take it." He watched as Richie put alcohol on his ear before he drove the clean needle through his ear.

Will grunted a bit at the pain, but the moment the ruby earring was in his ear, he felt relieved. "How does it look?"

"It looks like it belongs in your ear." Richie smiled at him.

Will looked happy to hear it. A man from town showed up at the side of the ship, Richie looked over at him, “Hello?”

“Captain? Our leader will see you now.” The man spoke out to him.

Richie looked to Will, “Want to come with me?” Will nodded, the two of them heading down the ramp of the ship.

They walked deep into town, spotting huts similar to those on Stavros, only in boxed shapes rather than circular ones. Small children played in the street happily despite the fact the sun was about to go down.

Stepping into the largest hut, Richie spotted a man lying in bed, his wife wiping down his forehead with a cool cloth. “Hello, I’m Rowland. I lead this island, at least I did when I was healthier.” The man coughed a bit before taking a drink of water from a wooden cup on the table next to him.

“I’m Captain Richie Tozier. How long have you been sick, might I ask?” Richie questioned.

“Months now… None of my doctors here know what it is.” Rowan told Richie, “What can I do for you?”

“That can wait.” Richie turned to Will, “Go get Eddie, I want him to take a look at this man.” Will nodded before heading back to the ship quickly.

“You’re bringing me your ship doctor?” Rowan questioned.

“Yes, you need urgent care. At the very least, I want to try everything we can for you.” Richie told him seriously.

It only took a couple of minutes before Eddie came in with Will, holding his bag of medical supplies they’d picked up on their travels. Eddie wrapped a cloth around his mouth and nose, trying it behind his head before he approached, “What’s the symptoms?” Eddie asked.

His wife spoke first, “He has abdomen pain, nausea, vomiting, a near constant fever, and there is blood when-” Richie didn’t stick around to hear the rest of the symptoms, he took Will into the next room to

let Eddie figure out what was going on.

“Do you think he’s dying?” Will asked.

“It looks that way.” Richie nodded, “I hope there’s something we can do, but it doesn’t look hopeful. Montiva has a lot of ships, and a lot of people that could potentially back me in this war… If I don’t have Montiva, things might get more difficult. Precisely why I didn’t tell the people of West Shire who else we were recruiting. I didn’t want them to get their hopes up if they didn’t have anyone backing them.” Richie explained.

“I believe in us.” Will told Richie honestly, “We just have to wait and hear the diagnoses.”

After several minutes of waiting, Eddie came out of the bedroom, taking his face mask off, “He’s got something called Kindle-Worm.” Eddie told them, “It’s a parasite that can be treated, but there’s only one known cure, and its not on this island.”

“That’s great news! What does he need?” Richie asked.

“Tivia leaf. It grows in the mainlands, the heat of Montiva is too tough on it to grow here. Luckily, it is a fairly common plant.” Eddie told them.

Richie looked from Eddie to Will, “Tell the crew we’re going to Palma. It’s an island right behind Luvos, and they specialize in the trade of herbs, spices and medicine. They have to have it.” Richie told Will.

Nodding his head, Will headed back to the ship. Richie looked at Eddie, “Can you stay here and keep him going until we get back?”

Eddie nodded, “I can prolong his life, but you have to be fast. I don’t know how much time he has left.”

Richie nodded, “Tivia leaf… that should be easy to remember. I’ll be back, Eds.” Richie said to him before running off to catch up to Will.

Will looked back at him, “Aren’t we bringing Eddie?”

“No, he’s going to make sure nothing happens to Rowan before we return.” Richie informed Will.

Richie told the other ships what was happening and that he and the main crew would return immediately. Hopper was left in charge of the two remaining ships. At the very least, Montiva wasn’t a bad place to be stuck for a few days. Bill and Dustin worked on rigging the ship, Steve and Lucas worked on the sails. Mike Hanlon and Stan Uris got behind the wheel, turning the ship in the direction it needed to go.

“Tivia leaf… I know what that looks like” Nancy Wheeler informed Richie as he spoke to the crew on the deck of the ship once they were headed the right way.

“Good, because this is a big deal and we can’t afford to lose someone on our watch.” Richie told them all.

Everyone nodded, eager to help Rowan as best as they could. By nightfall, the ship was still racing towards Palma. Off in the distance they could see Luvos, letting them know they were at least on the right track. Bill kept busy, making sure everything was in order for sailing at full speed. It seemed Bill wanted to return to Eddie as quickly as possible, to which Richie understood.

Richie sat in his cabin with Will, the two of them playing cards together to pass the time. Neither one of them were tired, they were so full of adrenaline they couldn’t fathom the idea. “Richie, why didn’t you tell Rowan what you wanted from him while we were there?” Will asked curiously.

“The man’s sick and needed help. I wasn’t about to ask for his help at a time like that. It would be like demanding he help me or I wouldn’t help him.” Richie explained, his feet up on the table as he leaned back in his chair.

Will smiled softly, “This is why I’m so happy to be following you. It’s refreshing and very rare to meet someone who actually cares about people.”

Richie smiled softly, “I wish more people would follow my example.

People these days are so selfish, no one cares about anyone else, just themselves. I want to change that."

"You're doing a good job so far." Will said putting down a card on the table.

"I hope so." Richie put down a card before looking at Will, "After Eddie's got the cure in Rowan's body, we'll have to wait a few days and see how he feels. Only then will I tell him what I want. I want him to have the option to say no without feeling like he's trapped."

"Zachary was lucky." Will said before he thought better of it.

"What's that?" Richie asked curiously.

Will looked away, "Zachary was lucky to have you. To have your heart. You're a far better than man than most."

Richie shook his head, "He was anything but lucky to have me… if I wasn't in the picture, he would have still been alive."

"He was a better person to have known you though. He was in love. I think he'd probably feel that was enough to feel lucky about." Will told him seriously.

Richie gave Will a sad smile, "You know, you're going to fall in love someday too. I just know it. You're so sweet, and selfless. Someone is going to have a hard time staying away from you."

Will looked at his cards, saying nothing, "Perhaps."

They played quietly for a while longer before passing out at the table together. The moment the ship docked in Palma, Richie, and the entire crew aside from Georgie, Holly, and Max got off the boat. Nancy was a big help as she spotted the leaf immediately on one of the vendors tables. "How much for the tivia leaf?" Richie asked.

"One piece of gold per leaf." The man behind the vendors table told him.

Richie decided to get more tivia leaf than he might ever need just in case. Paying for the tivia leaf with some gold from the coin purse,

Richie got the crew back to the ship, they didn't have time to do anything else, they just knew they had to return to Montiva.

The crew was in higher spirits on the way back to the island. Steve and Nancy were drinking together on the deck of the ship along with many of the other crew mates. Richie and Will laid on their backs, staring up at the stars along with Stan, Bill, and Mike Hanlon.

"That's scorpio." Stan pointed above them.

It was nice to star gaze with someone who actually knew the stars. "Is that anything? That star is so bright…" Will pointed to one particular star.

"That's the north star." Stan explained, "It's always the most prominent one."

"Stars are so beautiful…" Will sighed peacefully. "I used to love staring out at them at night when I lived in Pavlovia… it was one of the few things that made me happy back them."

Richie looked over at him, "I used to watch them in Valora Kingdom, but I never knew what they meant… how did you learn, Stan?" Richie asked.

"My father was the head of a temple. He taught me everything before he found out I wasn't going to marry the woman he picked for me. Then he sold me." Stan said bitterly.

"What a bastard…" Richie said shaking his head.

Mike Hanlon gently laced his finger with Stan's. They said nothing, the action was enough to speak for itself. Bill stared up at the sky, a sad look in his eyes, "It's sad to think about how the world works… It's so cruel, and so selfish." Bill spoke softly, "Georgie… he deserved better."

"That wasn't your fault, Bill." Richie said to him, looking over at his auburn friend.

"If only it had been me out there that day… I could have taken it for him." Bill's eyes were watery, "I feel so guilty…"

“Bill, it shouldn’t have happened at all, it’s not your fault.” Mike Hanlon told him seriously.

Bill closed his eyes, tears still trickling from his eyes, “I just hate that it happened…”

“I know… we all do. We all love Georgie.” Richie assured him.

Silence surrounded them for a while as they remained staring up at the sky above them as the boat rocked slowly. Will closed his eyes, falling asleep rather quickly to the rocking of the boat. When the sun rose, Will found himself in the cabin with Richie, lying next to the snoring pirate who was only wearing his leather pants. “Richie?” Will asked, his voice barely able to be heard.

“Mmm?” Richie opened an eye, squinting at him.

“I don’t remember coming here last night… we passed out on the deck… right?” Will asked.

“You did,” Richie pointed at Will, “I carried you to bed, you were out cold, and you didn’t even have a drink.”

Will rubbed his eyes, “Oh…” The sun was beaming through the hole in the curtain, lighting up the cabin just enough to see. “I wonder how close we are to Montiva…”

Richie stretched, getting up from the bed, “I’ll go check.” Richie said pulling on his boots, and then a shirt before grabbing his hat off the table.

Will pulled on his boots that Richie had taken off him in the night before following him to the deck of the ship. Mike and Stan were at the wheel together, looking over the map. “Are we close to Montiva?” Richie questioned them.

“Very close. We’ll be docking in a little over an hour.” Stan informed Richie.

“I bet you can’t wait to be back in Montiva.” Mike Hanlon spoke quickly.

“What is that supposed to mean?” Stan looked at him confused.

Mike Hanlon smirked at him, “All those handsome men, staring at you where ever you walk? They think you’re gorgeous.”

Stan scoffed, rolling his eyes, “Of course I am.” Stan winked before looking back at the map.

Richie chuckled, nearly running right into Will as he turned around, “Want to go to breakfast?” Richie asked him.

Will nodded, heading to the dining hall. Jane sat next to his cousin Mike at the long table, picking things off his plate, eating them. Mike would nudge her with a smile, and she’d smile back. It was nice to see such a new side of his cousin. Richie sat down in his usual spot with Will.

Georgie had made a scrambled egg breakfast with bacon from Montiva’s market, and even fresh bread. Will grabbed a pear from the fruit tray before him, biting into it eagerly. “Mm…”

Will licked his fingers clean from the juices of the pear, Richie’s eyes linger a little longer than they should have. “So, let’s hope Eddie can work his magic, and save Rowland.” Max said, her long red hair braided.

“Huh?” Richie said looking over at Max suddenly.

“You never listen to me…” Max sighed, “You’re always too busy staring at your lover.”

“What? I wasn’t staring at anyone, I just didn’t hear you.” Richie said defensively.

Max scoffed, “I said…” she looked him in the eye, “I hope Eddie can work his magic and make Rowland all better again.”

“Oh… yeah I hope so too.” Richie said before putting some food on his plate, avoiding eye contact as he ate.

Will didn't understand the teasing going on in front of him, but he ate his pear until just a core dangled before him. Reaching for another pear, Will began eating it in the same fashion. Taking a bite, and then licking the juice off his fingers audibly.

"Wow, Will… you really enjoy those pears, huh?" Beverly winked at Richie who rolled his eyes, pretending not to notice as Will sucked his thumb clean of juice.

"They're so good… I could eat them every day." Will smiled at her, biting into it again.

Richie ate his eggs silently, not willing to draw more attention to the fact that what Will was doing was starting to get to him. He needed to spend the night with someone and soon, he couldn't think of another logical reason for why he was feeling aroused so easily.

The ship was docked in Montiva in one hour and ten minutes. Richie, and his crew climbed off the boat, heading straight for Rowland's house. Eddie was busying himself inside, working at blood letting which seemed to be helping much to Richie's surprise.

Eddie's eyes lit up the moment Richie came in holding the tivia leaves, "Perfect! I'll start making the cure." Eddie took the leaves, heading out of the room towards the fireplace.

Richie and his crew watched as Rowland progressively healed upon ingesting the cure Eddie made. The first night was the hardest, his body attempted to shed itself of the parasite, before he was able to start the healing process.

Within a few days, Rowland walked to the ship, to greet them as they emerged from the dining hall well fed. Smiling brightly, Richie looked to Rowland, "You're looking much better!" Richie smiled climbing down to stand before him on the sand.

"I have you to thank for it." The man pulled Richie into a warm embrace, "Now come, let us talk about these plans of yours. I will see what I can do to be of help."

Will watched Richie go of with Rowland. The two seemed to be

having a good talk, Will could tell by the way Richie's mouth pulled into a genuine smile that he was happy. There was something amazing about watching Richie accomplish the things he was setting out to do. Will couldn't explain why, but he felt his hope restored just being in Richie's company.

When Richie returned to the deck of the ship, he called for a meeting in fifteen minutes on the beach. Ever member of the crew across all the ships were present as he announced they would be joined by two more ships. Rowland was sending his many men with Richie's crew to help them fight against Pavlovia should they need it.

"This fight against Pavlovia, just got easier." The people of West Shire Island cheered him on along with the rest of his crew, "We're going to win! We just have to believe in our future!"

Will smiled, clapping his hands as everyone cheered, "Tonight! We celebrate with the wonderful people of Montiva before we set out on our journey East!" Richie threw a fist in the air, a big smile on his face.

Everyone was having a good time on the beach, dancing, singing, and drinking together. Lucas and Max were even dancing together, laughing as they tried to out dance one another. Nancy and Steve looked happy as they danced together, but somehow Mike Wheeler and Jane looked the happiest just sitting in the sat staring out at the water with a bottle of wine between them.

Taking a seat on the sand, Will watched the sunset in the distance. It was so beautiful on Montiva island, Will wanted to return there again one day, but without Richie he wondered if it would be worth it.

"Will, here you are." Richie came over to him, a big smile on his face, "You seem to like wandering off alone, any reason why?"

Watching as Richie took a seat next to him, Will shrugged a little, "I'm just thinking. I'm surprised you aren't drunk yet."

Richie chuckled, "Well, I probably will be before long." Richie looked out at the waves as they sat together. "I think we really accomplished something wonderful here."

“You did.” Will told him.

“With the help of my crew, yes.” Richie looked at him, nudging his arm, “You’re a big part of my crew.”

“I’m just your cabin boy, Richie. Eddie is the real hero.” Will told him looking out at the water some more.

“You inspire me not to give up. So, I’d say, you are just as much a part of this.” Richie told him with a soft smile.

“I don’t know… I don’t really see how I help at all…” Will said honestly, looking down, “The only thing I’m good at, I’ve had to stop being.”

Richie looked at him gently, a hand reaching up to rub Will’s back soothingly. Will closed his eyes, “Hey… you’re more than your past. Really, you are.” Richie told him honestly, “You mean a lot to me.”

“I know… I just… I…” Will looked at Richie, unable to say the words coming to mind, “I… think I’m just tired.”

“Want me to walk you back to the cabin?” Richie suggested.

“No. You should celebrate. Get drunk. Dance. Do something stupid with someone you hardly know…” Will said before getting up, quickly heading up the side of the boat.

Richie watched him go, not sure what it was that was bothering Will so much. The only thing that came to mind was the fact that upon conquering Pavlovia, they would part ways until the war was over. Maybe Will didn’t understand that Richie would come back for him?

Getting up off the sand, Richie ran after Will, heading to the cabin to find Will sitting at the table, eyes drenched with tears. “Will, I’d come back for you once the war is over. You know that right?” Richie told him, hoping this bit of information would change everything he was feeling.

Will wiped his eyes, trying to stop the tears unsuccessfully. “Leave me alone.” Will said in a voice Richie barely recognized.

“Will, I don’t like to see you like this.” Richie told him, placing a hand on his shoulder.

“No. Go.” Will said sternly.

Richie pulled him close, wrapping both his arms around Will from behind. Holding his arms, Will only seemed to cry harder feeling Richie hold onto him so warmly. “I’m here… I’m not going anywhere.” Richie told him softly.

Will listened to Richie soothingly talk to him. After a few seconds, Will’s anger dissipated. Turning around in Richie’s arms, he hugged Richie back. Holding Will tight to his chest, Richie rubbed his back as Will’s face pressed into his neck. After a few minutes, Will pulled back, “I’m sorry…”

“Don’t be. You’re upset for a reason. You don’t want me to leave you… I understand.” Richie told Will, smoothing out his blonde hair gently.

“I’ve never felt this sad before… It’s like I miss you so much already, but you haven’t even left yet.” Will said sniffling a bit.

Richie knew he was Will’s first true friend. The first friend who had ever done anything kind for him. It was a relationship like none other for Will, and there would never be a way to feel alright about being apart. Richie felt the same, but he had to stick to his guns. The war would surely kill his best friend. That was the last thing Richie needed.

“Will, I promise,” Richie took one of Will’s hands in both of his, “I will come back for you. I swear on all the stars in the sky, that I will come back to Pavlovia the moment I win this war.”

Will looked at him sadly, “I know that, Richie. I know you would… but what if you lose? That’s the part I’m afraid of.” Will looked at him, a hurt expression in his eyes.

“That’s not going to happen.” Richie assured him, “I’ll never lose, not with the crew I have.”

Will looked at him for a long moment, forcing a small smile on his

face, “Right.”

Richie let go of Will’s hand, “Do you want to go celebrate, or do you want to stay here? The choice is yours.”

Will looked at him for a moment, “I want to go with you.”

“Ok then.” Richie smiled, tugging him by his hand.

It wasn’t what Will meant, but he wasn’t going to explain that to Richie.

13. Taking Pavlovia

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie's crew docks at Pavlovia, ready to take on the slavers and free the slaves.

Chapter 13

The trip to Mikos was nearly a week long. The venture from Mikos to Pavlovia was going to be just as long. The morning they docked, Richie woke up with Will half on top of him, the two were cuddled under the blanket together, Will's face in his neck.

Smiling softly, Richie felt happy waking up in such a way. "Will?" Richie asked softly.

Will made a noise against his neck that reminded Richie of a purr. He had goosebumps as he looked at Will's body, "It's morning, and we've docked."

Rolling off Richie, Will let himself lie on his back, "Breakfast…"

Richie couldn't help but laugh as he got up, pulling his boots on before his shirt was next. "Come on sleepy head. Let's go get some food. There's still pears." Richie reminded Will who was pulling his boots on a little faster at the thought.

The two of them arrived in the dining hall just as the rest of the crew was heading inside, "I can't wait to get off this boat, and hit the market place." Dustin said to Steve as the bards headed into the dining room, taking their seats.

Georgie put out the food for everyone, setting out some more of his much-loved fish cakes. Beverly took two of them for her plate. "Thanks Georgie." She smiled, leaning in to kiss Georgie on the cheek only to make him blush.

Will picked up a pear, and the entire conversation around Richie wasn't able to be heard as he watched Will bite into it, using his tongue to catch the droplets of juice as he did nearly every morning.

Richie looked at him with a smile, admiring how beautiful his cabin boy was. His thoughts were broken as he thought of Zachary with a pang of guilt.

Richie bit into a fish cake, chewing it quietly. The day was set to be a market day. They would load up on supplies, and then immediately set out to sea in an attempt to reach Pavlovia before three sunsets passed.

Will and Richie made it to the market place together along with the rest of the crew. It seemed something was on Will's mind. "Richie…"

"Will." Richie said back eyeing him for a moment.

"Are you nervous about… taking over Pavlovia?" Will questioned.

"Not exactly. I feel like it'll turn out well. We might not have to fight if we show up overpowering them." Richie suggested.

"They'll fight… trust me… that place is all they have." Will spoke of the slavers from experience; Richie had every reason to believe Will.

"I want you to do me a favour when we reach Pavlovia." Richie told him.

"What's that?" Will asked looking Richie in the eyes.

"I want you to stay in the cabin. I don't want you out of that ship until it's all over." Richie said to him seriously, "I can't let them take your life."

"I can't honour that request, Richie. What if something happened to you? I'd want to at least know I tried to help you." Will said looking him in the eyes softer now.

Richie looked at him, he knew where Will was coming from, so he simply nodded his head, "I can respect that… Still, you are armed at all times, Staff or sword." Richie informed him.

"I can agree to that." Will said, feeling like they were talking less like friends, and more like soldiers in an army.

“Will… I really hope you can make some better memories on that island. New, happy memories with your family.” Richie told him, a hint of sadness in his voice.

Will nodded, “That would be nice…” Looking down, Will didn’t sound so sincere.

“Want to pick anything up from the market while we’re here?” Richie offered.

Will shook his head, “No, thank you.”

A few of the men on Mikos Island attempted to flirt with Beverly, but she wasn’t having any of it. Her attention drifting away from them quickly in an attempt to ignore them. Ben was quick to step in much to her amusement. The men backed off upon sizing up Ben. Will and Richie caught sight of what happened, “Damn it, Beverly. Just attracting every man in sight, huh?” Richie smirked at her.

Beverly stuck her tongue out at him, continuing the shopping with Ben at her side. “I’ve always wondered what that must feel like…” Will muttered barely audible.

“Being hit on?” Richie asked.

“Yeah. I guess I’ve just never experienced it before.” Will shrugged, “People were much more interested in Stan when we were sailing away from Pavlovia…”

“Please, you’re one of the more attractive guys I’ve seen. Plenty of men must be interested in you.” Richie told Will casually.

Will rolled his eyes, “I am not. You’re handsome, you could have any man or woman. I’m just… Will Byers.” Will said with a sigh.

“Sexy Will Byers is more like it.” Richie winked at him, making Will smile.

“I don’t believe you.” Will laughed, “You’re sweet though.”

“You can’t be serious!” Richie looked at him shocked, “You don’t know how good looking you are?”

“Stop it, I shouldn’t have said anything.” Will shoved Richie a little with a smile.

“All I’m saying is, I’d suck your dick.” Richie winked.

“You were also hammered beyond clear thinking when that happened. You don’t even remember it.” Will reminded him.

“Are you suggesting we try again so I do?” Richie waggled his brows.

“Richie… not nice.” Will went red, looking away.

“What? You didn’t like the way my mouth felt wrapped around your-” Richie was elbowed in the side, making him laugh.

“Stop that. I know you’re used to doing things with your friends, but, I probably shouldn’t have let you do that to me.” Will said as they walked.

“Why not? You enjoyed it.” Richie smiled at him, “Right?”

“I did… it felt amazing, but you did it out of pity.” Will shrugged, “It’s just not the same as someone doing it because they wanted me to feel good.”

“I didn’t pity you, Will.” Richie said looking a bit taken aback.

“You don’t even remember, but it was clear why you were doing it…” Will sighed, “It’s alright though. Better to have experienced it once than never to have ever experienced it.”

“You talk like someone who has no hope for a romantic future.” Richie pointed out.

“Honestly? I don’t have any hope for it. I will probably always be alone.” Will said with a shrug, “I’m ok with that. I know what I want, that’s enough for me.”

Richie looked intrigued as they walked onto the boat together, “Well, now you have to tell me what it is that you want?”

Will smiled softly at him, “Someone who loves me back the way I

love them."

"You just wait. It'll happen." Richie assured him.

Will said nothing, taking the mop out of the bucket on deck, deciding to take some time to clean the deck. Richie watched him with a sigh, seeing Will so down along their last journey together for a while was making him sad. Richie went to the dining hall, deciding to find himself a new bottle of wine to crack open.

By three days into their sail, Stan informs them the will be upon Pavlovia by dawn. Will only seems more and more fidgety as dinner drags on for the crew. He hardly touched the small amount of food he put on his plate, what he did eat was from Richie's encouragement. This worried Richie a lot. By the time they retired to the cabin for the night, Richie questioned him on it.

"Will… you aren't ok. You haven't been for quite some time." Richie told him, "Did you want to talk about anything?"

"No, I'll be ok." Will lied.

"Will, please talk to me." Richie looked at him sadly, "This is our last night together and I want us to be getting along for it. I miss seeing you smile and laugh."

"Can you just… hold me for a bit? It doesn't have to be long, just before we go to sleep." Will looked at him.

"Hold you? How?" Richie asked curiously.

Lying down on his side, he patted the spot where he wanted Richie to lie before him. Richie took his boots off, climbing onto the bed beside Will. Wrapping his arms around Richie's middle, Will pressed his face into Richie's chest. Letting one arm rest under Will's head, Richie wrapped the other around his body.

It felt nice to hold onto Will like that. It also brought back memories of he and Zachary. Will's hands were rubbing up and down Richie's back beneath Richie's shirt, feeling his warm smooth skin. Squeezing Will tightly, Richie pressed his lips to the top of Will's head gently. His hair tickling Richie's nose a little.

Feeling Richie's arms around him, Will relaxed, slipping into a deep sleep. Richie followed soon after, not waking until he felt the ship docking. Looking around, he noticed Will was still lying in his arms, his eyes looking Richie over, "Richie?" Will asked.

"Yeah, it's time to go." Richie looked at him softly.

"Please don't go…" Will begged him.

"Will, we're in Pavlovia. It's time to bring down the slavers. Are you with me? Or not?" Richie asked him curiously.

Will gently pulled back, knowing he couldn't continue the fantasy of them being together any longer. It was time to give up on it. "I'm with you…"

The slavers of Pavlovia didn't understand why so many ships were at their docks, but they didn't attack, they assumed the ships were there for the trade in the market. A few of the slaves were already being brought to the docks for sale. Richie hated how everything was all set up, it made him sick to see people on sale, each of them wearing loin clothes, or breast coverings if they were female.

Beyond the market, there were little to no trees hiding the large temple-like structure that housed all the slavers and the slaves. It was made of the palest stone, many pillars along the stone steps. Off in the distance, Richie could see the lush crops in which many slaves could be seen even from his distance.

Everyone on the other ships knew the moment Richie walked off the boat, they all were to follow. Once all the boats were empty, Richie realized just how big his crew actually was; they looked just as determined as he felt.

Being back on Pavlovia seemed strange to Will, like he had only been there before in a dream. The slaver that approached Richie had brown hair and a large sword hanging from his belt. "Is this all your crew?" The man asked casually.

"Yes. Who would you be? The leader of this island?" Richie asked, hiding his distaste carefully.

“I’m James, head market guard. The leader is Elder Connie Fraizier. Did you come here to buy slaves? We can get you as many as you want provided you have the gold.”

“I want them all.” Richie smirked.

James looked at him for a moment, “That would cost a lot more than I think you can afford.”

“Don’t worry, I didn’t intend to pay for them.” Richie drew his sword, only to see the slaves cowering, heads down as the slavers drew their own swords.

“You think you can take us? There’s over two hundred people on this island, you don’t out number us.” James declared.

“Yes, but less than half of them are fighters.” Richie pointed out, “The rest of them will just submit, like you taught them to.”

Will stood in the row of bodies behind Richie, his staff in hand as he watched the scene play out before him. The guards walked towards the crew, forming a line, a barricade, between the pirates and the market place.

Richie looked at James challengingly, “I hope you find it worth it to die for such a pitiful cause. I’m not leaving here until every last one of your slavers is dead.”

“So be it.” James said before slashing at Richie with his sword, only for Richie to block it, making his strike next.

Will tripped several guards with his staff, his determination to stay near Richie as the crew killed the slavers of the beach was strong. Jane made it even easier for them as she crushed the brains of many guards with just her mind. Once she had taken down a dozen by herself, the confidence of Richie’s crew managed to grow. Hopper, Joyce, and Nancy all worked with guns, shooting from behind barrels, and other such places of cover.

Once Richie saw a break in the line, he charged towards the sandstone building a quarter of a mile away. Will didn’t see where Richie had gone as he beat down a few more guards with his near

broken staff. Once he realized Richie was running off with just a handful of crew members, his heart started beating faster. Will ran after Richie, knowing there were more guards inside that would be harder to defeat.

Richie looked back at Bill Denbrough, Ben Hanscom, Mike Hanlon, and Stan Uris as he entered the main hall. There were three places to venture to next, Richie opted for them to split up, and hunt down the remaining slavers that way. “Bill and Ben: You take left. Mike and Stan: Take right. I’ll go straight down.” Richie said holding his sword. His crew obeyed, quietly sneaking off.

Walking down the main hall, several slaves pressed their backs against the walls fearfully, but Richie simply kept moving, checking each room for slavers. He found none as he entered the final room in the hallway. He was about to exit the large room when a brunette slaver with his sword drawn blocked his path. Richie dodged the first sword swing only to block the second. Who ever the man was, he was good with a sword. Too good.

“Thought you and your pirate crew could just waltz in and shut us down?” The man asked slashing at Richie, nearly knocking him off balance, “We’ve heard of you. You stopped a couple of our slave ships from reaching their destination. Do you know how much gold we lost? We’ll be sure to take everything you have once we’ve beaten you.”

Richie scoffed, “Good luck.” Slashing at the man, Richie managed to cut his opponents arm.

Enraged, the man slashed violently, his sword cutting through the air loudly as he swung at Richie with a near blind rage. Richie didn’t realize how stupid he had been to go alone until the moment his sword was thrown from his hand. Richie went wide eyed, but dodged each swing, attempting to get closer to his sword again.

“Before I kill you, I think you should know that all your petty crew mates left are going to make wonderful slaves the moment we break them. Also, I’m Troy. You should know who killed you before it happens.” Troy made a swing at Richie, sending Richie diving to the floor to get out of the way.

Before Richie had time to think of his next move, Troy was charging for him, sword ready in his hand. Richie had little chance of escape, but he didn't have any time to think on it as he watched a sword blade burst through Troy's chest cavity. Troy's mouth leaked blood as he stood in place for a few moments before the sword was pulled from his chest, leaving him to fall to the side, revealing a shocked looking Will behind him, holding Richie's sword.

Getting to his feet Richie approached Will who was holding the sword, shaking violently. "Will… are you alright?" Richie looked at him surprised.

"I killed him…" Will couldn't seem to focus on anything but the blade in his hands, slick with blood.

Richie carefully took the sword from Wills hands, sheathing it. Will stared down at Troy's body, trembling. Pulling him into a warm embrace, Richie held Will close. "You saved me. Thank you so much." Will held onto him, still shaking.

Will teared up, pressing his face into Richie's neck. Richie could feel the warm tears on his neck as Will sobbed gently. Richie held him, keeping an eye on the doorway to keep from being attacked by surprise. "Shh… shhhh… it's ok." Richie ran his fingers through Will's hair.

Calming down a little more, Will pulled back from Richie, looking at him with watery eyes, "I couldn't let him kill you. You mean so much to me." Will told him.

Richie smiled gently, "I owe you."

"Richie! We've got the last of the slavers in the great hall." Mike Wheeler's voice called out as he entered the room. "Are you ready to deal with them?"

Richie let go of Will slowly before looking to Mike, "Yeah, I'm coming." Richie laced his fingers with Will's as he left the room, taking one last glance at Troy' bloody corpse on the floor.

Notes for the Chapter:

Thoughts and feelings? I hope you enjoy it!

14. Blossoming

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie gives Will a present the day before he's supposed to take the rest of the crew and leave Will on Pavlovia with his family. Their relationship blossoms from there.

Chapter 14

After the remaining slavers chose to die for their slave trade, Richie ordered them to death by being bound, and tossed into the ocean with a bag of rocks tied to their legs. The slaves didn't seem to understand they were free, even when Will tried to get it through their heads, but everyone was rather understanding after seeing how hard Will struggled for the first couple of months.

Hopper and Joyce worked hard with the rest of the West Shire civilization to restore some sane sense of order to the island of Pavlovia. Richie was satisfied with the outcome of their attack. Very few casualties on their side of the fight were accounted for. Those that died were given a proper burial on the island.

Sitting on his knees on the grass in front of the building, Will was hard at work planting seeds from a pear into the ground. Richie came over to him with a smile, "Hey, you got those pear trees started I see. Top priority." Richie grinned at him.

Will looked up at him, smiling softly, "Yeah, I hope they actually can grow here."

"They will… I believe in them." Richie looked around, making sure they were alone before he spoke, "Will, are you still holding up ok after the situation with Troy?"

Will shrugged, "I guess. He deserved to die, so that wasn't the problem… I suppose the real issue is that slaves don't kill, and I really am no longer a slave."

“How’s that an issue?” Richie asked.

“I wasn’t fully aware of how free I felt until that moment I killed. I broke the biggest rule… It was life changing.” Will told him honestly.

Richie nodded, “I’m proud of you, Will. You’ve come so far.”

“Thank you.” Will smiled gently.

“We’re setting out tomorrow for Grenada. I want to talk to Norbert Keene about making some changes. Out of the three kingdoms, that one seems like the easier one to sway to my way of thinking.” Richie informed Will.

Looking away, Will nodded, “Well, I hope the sea doesn’t give you any trouble.”

“Hey, there’s something on the ship I wanted to give you.” Richie told him, “Want to come get it?”

Will got to his feet, nodding to Richie, “Sure.”

Richie led him up the plank before reaching the deck. Mike Wheeler and Jane were sitting rather close on the edge of the ship, hands linked together as they talked. Richie smiled warmly at their backs before leading Will into the cabin.

Wil looked around, wondering what Richie was going to give him. Richie pulled over one of his books, opening it to show Will two pieces of parchment pressed between the pages. Lifting one of the pieces of parchment, Will spotted a lily from West Shire island that had been flattened and dried. “Oh, Richie…” Will looked at it, his eyes softening.

“I wanted you to make sure you had a little piece of your real home.” Richie smiled at him gently.

Will looked at him, a look in his eyes that Richie hadn’t been able to read. Will placed the book on the table, cupping Richie’s face in both hands before he leaned in pressing their lips together. Richie was shocked, but his arms automatically wrapped around Will. The kiss was slow, and gentle. After a moment Richie felt the need to deepen

the kiss. Their lips opened, and Richie found his tongue sliding into Will's mouth. The smaller man groaned softly, kissing him back just as deeply. Will began undoing the ties to the front of Richie's pants, making Richie break the kiss as he looked at Will curiously, "Wait, what are you doing?"

The look of desire in Will's eyes made Richie swallow a bit nervously, "I want you to be my first." Will whispered before pressing their lips back together.

Richie groaned, kissing him back lovingly before he pulled back, holding Will by his shoulders, "Will, you can't want that. You wanted it to be special, right?"

"You are special to me, Richie. You mean everything to me." Will told him honestly, "I love you."

Richie felt his heart beating faster, "I love you too, Will, but you deserve so much better than me." Richie told him.

"Richie, you are everything I've ever wanted. There is nothing better." Will shook his head, "You're leaving me tomorrow, I know. I might never see you again. I want to know that I at least had you in some sense…"

Richie swallowed down the lump in his throat, "I really want you too, but I don't want to hurt you…"

"I've been hurting since I found out you were going away… I can't hurt any more than this. I promise. I just really need you, please take me." Will told him desperately.

Richie cupped his face, pressing their lips back together. Will tossed Richie's hat off his head, finally untying Richie's leather pants. Will ran his tongue along Richie's lower lip slowly, making Richie melt as he pulled Will's shorts down. They parted their lips long enough to remove their shirts, kicking their boots away quickly. Richie pulled Will over to the bed once they were both naked. Will's head rested against the pillows in the center of the mattress. Richie reached over to pull open the drawer next to his bed. A small vial of oil was pulled from it before Richie uncapped it. Will Watched Richie lubricate his

fingers before looking into Will's passionate eyes. "If anything hurts, you tell me. I'll stop." Richie said before kissing his lips once gently.

Will nodded, pulling Richie in for a deeper kiss. Richie's fingers slid along Will's back entrance, gently rubbing him with one finger before he applied pressure. Will moaned softly upon feeling Richie enter him up to the first knuckle. Richie's erection was hard, pressing into Will's leg, "Holy shit… you're really tight… this might take some time…"

"Nothing has ever been in me until now." Will informed him.

Richie shivered a bit, pleased to be the first person to touch him in such a way. Sliding in a little further, Will groaned softly. Richie rubbed around inside of him, trying to get Will used to the feeling of being opened up. "Does this feel ok?"

Will nodded, "Yeah." He smiled, kissing Richie's lips some more, "Mm…" He moaned softly.

Richie pressed the rest of the way inside, his finger pressing into Will's prostate. Will let out a soft moan, "Richie… that feels good…"

Rubbing in a circular motion, Richie watched Will arch his back, enjoying the soft moans he was pulling from the blonde beneath him. "It's time to make you feel really good." Richie said as he slid down Will's body, wrapping his mouth around the head of Will's erection.

Moaning loudly, Will arched his back. "Oh, Richie!"

"Shh, or they're throw flowers at you." Richie smirked.

"Let them… I want the flowers thrown at me." Will moaned as Richie's mouth went back to work on his erection.

Richie slide a second finger inside of Will, but the pleasure he was feeling seemed to take away from the pain. Richie licked up the underside of Will's erection. "Oh yes!" Will moaned as his back arched some more when Richie's fingers found his prostate again.

Scissoring carefully, Richie worked at opening Will up before he slid in a third finger, making Will whimper a little. Stopping his motions, he looked into Will's eyes, "Are you ok?"

“Yeah, keep going.” Will encouraged, biting his lip as Richie found his prostate again, “Oh yes…”

Richie watched Will, his mouth still wrapped around Will’s erection. It was the most beautiful sight seeing Will wreathing and moaning on his back, on Richie’s bed.

“Richie… I want you inside me…” Will begged as he gripped the bedding below him.

Pulling his fingers from Will, Richie grabbed the vial of oil, rubbing plenty on his erection; it couldn’t get any stiffer it seemed. Climbing over Will, Richie looked into his eyes, “Are you sure you’re ready?”

Will wrapped arms around Richie’s shoulders, “Please. I need it.” Will begged him.

Sliding into Will, Richie stopped once just the head was inside. “Mmm… fuck!” Richie groaned as Will’s insides clenched him like a vice.

Attempting to relax, Will closed his eyes, “More…”

Richie bit his lower lip, sliding deeper into Will. “Oh my God…” Richie groaned.

Will wrapped his legs around Richie’s waist, encouraging Richie’s erection deeper inside. Once he was all the way inside, Will kissed his face repeatedly as Richie moaned softly. Richie finally kissed him back, their lips locking sensually. They remained locked together as they kissed each other sweetly, “I love you so much…” Richie said once their lips parted.

“I love you too, more than anything.” Will smiled sweetly, only for his eyes to roll back as Richie moved his hips, rubbing against his prostate.

Richie moved with Will, their bodies in bliss together as Richie began moving faster. Will gripped his shoulders tightly, “Richie! Oh yes! More!” Will begged.

Richie panted heavily, rutting into him quickly, his body letting go of

any thoughts or intentions as he moved according to what felt good to both of them. Will's fingers found his dark locks, tugging him back into a heated kiss. Whimpering as they kissed, Will felt himself building up, "Richie… I'm going to come…" Will said, their lips touching the entire time he spoke.

Moaning into Will's mouth, Richie was unable to hold back his arousal for much longer, "Come… please, Will…" Richie begged him, not willing to be the one to finish first.

Nails pressed into Richie's bare back as Will's legs clenched hard around him. It was nothing in comparison to the vicelike grip of his insides, strangling Richie's erection, coaxing the raven-haired man to climax along with him. The feeling of Will's semen coating his abdomen was a welcoming one. "Oh…" Richie groaned, sweating profusely as he tried to stop his endless panting.

Will felt Richie pull out of him, and he sighed with relief, lying on his back as he was completely spent. "Stay here with me tonight…" Richie asked Will.

"Are you sure?" Will asked breathlessly.

"I'm very sure. I want to spend as much time with you as I can before tomorrow morning…" Richie told him.

Will nodded, "Me too." Will agreed.

The moment Richie and Will stepped out of the cabin for bath water and food, a bucket of flowers fell on Richie's head. "I told you…" Richie turned to look at Will who was giggling like mad.

Will followed Richie onto the deck where everyone proceeded to throw flowers at them both. The smile on Will's face only got wider as people shouted, "Happy deflowering!" at them.

Richie wrapped his arms around Will, pulling him into a loving kiss while the flower petals were tossed at them. Will kissed him back before the two went to the dining hall with the rest of the crew, hand in hand. Everyone laughed and teased them fondly as they sat at dinner together. Will was just so happy there was nothing that was

going to bring him down that evening. It was one of the happiest evenings he could remember, and he wasn't going to waste a second of it dwelling on the morning.

Just as Richie was finishing up, he heard a knock on the door of the dining room. Getting up, Richie wondered who it was as his entire crew was dining with him already. Once he opened the door, he spotted Joyce, "Joyce?" Will glanced up.

"I came to speak with you, Richie. Do you mind?" She asked.

"Not at all." Richie smiled softly, heading outside, towards the deck with her, "Is there something you need before I leave tomorrow?"

"I just came to ask you something that's been on my mind." Joyce told him seriously.

The moment they made it to the deck, Richie nodded, "Of course, go ahead." He could already tell it was something about Will.

"He loves you. You know that, don't you?" Joyce asked him, her eyes soft, motherly.

"We've discussed it, yes. I feel the same about him." Richie nodded his head.

"When you brought him home to me, that was the best present anyone could have ever given me. I can't thank you enough for doing that." Joyce told him softly, "I just know that, he's changed a lot since he was a little boy. He'll never be the same now that he's been saved by you. I believe you've left a deep imprint on his heart." She spoke quietly, but with conviction.

"What is it that you wanted to ask me?" Richie questioned after a moment of deliberating her words.

"I was wondering if you might change your mind, maybe take Will with you on your journey?" Joyce asked, and Richie could tell it was a hard question for Joyce to ask.

"Oh, I… I really want to, believe me I do. I just… I can't risk anything happening to him." Richie said honestly.

“I think more harm would come to him staying here without you, than if he went with you. I’ve seen him crying several times now, over the fact that you will be leaving him. It’s not easy to be without someone you love. I understand you know a lot about that.” Joyce said softly, “Please, reconsider at least. We don’t have much in life, but love is a precious gift we all deserve. Let him be happy.”

Richie smiled softly at her, “I’ll consider it, Joyce. I mean it.”

Joyce smiled a little before heading off the boat without another word. Richie watched her go for a moment before he headed back to the dining hall. Beverly was grilling Will on how gentle Richie was being with him. “Are you sure he didn’t hurt you at all?”

“I’m sure, Bev.” Will giggled, “He was so gentle, I felt very little pain.”

Looking up at Richie, Will smiled warmly at him. Richie felt loved just looking into will’s soft hazel eyes. “Are you ready to go back to the cabin for a lovely bath?” Richie smirked, waggling his brows at Will.

“Yeah, let’s go.” Will got up immediately, the two of them running off together like a couple of teenagers. They brought back three buckets of bath water, filling the tub easily.

The two pulled their shirts off, kicking their boots away. Cupping Richie’s face, Will kissed him against the inside wall of their cabin the moment they set the water down. “Mm… I love you so much…” Will smiled, pressing more kisses to Richie’s face.

Richie grinned, “I’m glad to hear it seeing as I love you too, very very much.” The two picked up the buckets of water, filling the tub with smiles on their faces. Richie got into the water and it took no time at all for Will to join him. They scrubbed themselves clean, enjoying the feeling of lying in the warm water together as they kissed.

“I’m taking you with me.” Richie said suddenly, “Tomorrow, when I leave, you leave with me.”

Will paused, the two of them staring at one another. Will’s eyes

looked to be brimming with emotion, “Really?”

Richie smiled, nodding, “Really.”

Will pulled Richie in for a loving kiss, “Mmm… Yes, I’ll stay with you. I’m so happy, Richie.” Will looked at him, a look of pure happiness on his face.

“Let’s get out of the water, it’s getting cold.” Richie said before the two of them got out, pulling a towel around themselves.

Will couldn’t help but lean up for another kiss with Richie. He couldn’t believe he was allowed to stay with him. He pulled Richie over to the bed, pushing him onto his back to lie down on it.

Looking up at Will, Richie watched as Will undid his towel, pulling it off carefully. Next Richie watched Will untie Richie’s towel, pulling it from his legs. Before Richie could make a move, Will crawled onto the bed, wrapping his mouth around Richie’s erection. “Oh!” Richie stared down, wide eyed as Will moved his head up and down with expertise. No one he’d experienced in the past had such a good handle on how to blow him, but Will was doing it perfectly. “Will! Oh fuck… you really are good at this…” Richie panted heavily, wreathing under the blonde’s touch.

Will stared up at Richie, an amused expression on his face as Richie seemed to be going mad. The wet suctioning noises Will's mouth made were music to his ears. It was a sound Richie could have listened to all night if he had been able to. It took little to no time for Richie to pull Will off him, pressing Will on his back, Richie rolled on top of him. The two kissed heatedly, the hard, wet cock he’d been sucking was pressing into his pelvis. Richie reached for the vial of lubricant and began slicking his erection before inserting two lubricated fingers inside of Will. “Mmm… Richie.” Will gasped.

Without wasting another second, Richie removed his fingers from Will, replacing them with his hard erection. He placed Will’s legs on his chest, the ankles hooking on Richie’s shoulders. “Every day, we’re going to do this, right?” Will asked sounding hopeful as Richie moved his hips.

“Fuck, I hope so.” Richie moaned as he thrust hard in and out of Will.

“Oh God! Richie!” Will moaned, looking completely pleased beneath him, “I love you…”

“I love you too.” Richie smiled, feeling so happy he could say it finally.

The two moved together, Will moving his hips in sync with Richie, attempting to get the perfect friction going. Every thrust inside of him pounded at his prostate, making his erection ooze over time, “Richie…” Will said almost warningly.

“What is it? You about to come?” Richie smirked thrusting hard into him.

“Yes! Please… come in me…” Will begged, needing to feel Richie filling him up.

“Not yet, my little cabin boy… don’t release just yet.” Richie grinned, nibbling at Will’s ankle gently.

Will whimpered, trying to hold back from coming, but each thrust made it more and more difficult. “Richie, please…” Will begged, his insides clenching around Richie hard.

“I love when you beg.” Richie thrust faster inside of him, rutting mercilessly, “Come baby…”

Will moaned loudly, his insides constricting tightly around Richie, “OH! Yes! Richie!” The raven-haired captain could feel the come on his abdomen, it felt good to make Will come so hard.

Richie panted heavily, his body finally releasing; Will moaned with delight as he felt the warm liquid filling his insides. “Oh… that felt good…” Will panted softly below him.

“We should have been doing this all along…” Richie wiped the sweat from his forehead, “You feel amazing…”

“Agreed.” Will smiled sweetly.

Pulling out of Will slowly, Richie dropped onto the bed next to Will, a satisfied look in his dark eyes, “You’re beautiful, Will.”

Will cuddled into him, “So are you.” Their lips pressed together, and Richie couldn’t get over how good Will was at kissing him.

“Mm…” Richie pulled back after a second, cupping Will’s face with a smile, “happy deflowering.” Richie laughed with a goofy look on his face.

Will giggled, climbing under the blankets. Richie held Will close on his side, “Did you leave anything on the island you want to bring with us tomorrow?”

“No, but… I’ll be sure to break the news to my mom before too late.” Will looked at Richie, fingers curling around dark hair.

Richie nodded, “She really loves you and wants you to be happy.”

Will nodded, smiling at Richie, “She does. I love her.”

Richie rubbed Will’s ass, making the blonde break into a bit of a smile, “Your hand…”

“Yes?” Richie grinned.

“You’re rubbing my ass…” Will told him with a laugh.

“Of course I am, it’s mine now.” Richie began kissing Will’s neck repeatedly, making Will squeal a little at the feeling, “Oh, you like neck kisses… I’ll remember that.” Richie smirked at him deviously.

Will playfully shoved him, “Play nice. I’m still new to all this.”

“I know, but there’s so many things I’m still excited to try with you.” Richie said kissing him, “Just you wait and see.”

“Should I be worried?” Will laughed.

“Very worried, I’m a monster after all.” Richie teased kissing him again. “Tired?”

“Very.” Will nodded feeling Richie start to stroke his hair gently.

“Get some rest, I’ll hold you until morning.” Richie assured him.

Will gave Richie one last kiss before closing his eyes, a semi-permanent smile on his cute face. Richie closed his eyes, feeling like he was on top of the world. Unstoppable. He sure hoped he was anyway.

Notes for the Chapter:

Did you enjoy this chapter? :D

15. Storm on the Water

Summary for the Chapter:

> The Raveness crew is thrown for a surprise when they sail into a heavy storm. The crew does their best to make it to Jetta through it all.

Chapter 15

Will hugged his mother and older brother warmly the following morning on Pavlovia's beach. It was a sad goodbye, but Will promised to visit as soon as he was able to. Joyce cried, but she looked happy to see her son following his dreams.

"Let someone on the ship teach you how to sword fight. It's the best way to stay alive out there." Jonathan said to his little brother softly.

Will nodded, "I'm going to try learning from some of Richie's crew. They're really good teachers from what I hear."

Joyce cupped Will's face gently, "I'll see you very soon, sweet heart."

Will smiled, "You're the best mom I could have asked for." Will said before giving her one last hug, and a kiss on the cheek before he headed back onto the ship where Richie stood with a smile on his face.

"Can I kiss your mom goodbye too?" Richie teased.

"Ask her husband that question." Will said as he waved while the ship pulled out into sea.

Jane passed Richie and Will on her way towards the front of the deck. Her hair was growing in slowly, she was starting to get dark brown spikes. His cousin Mike seemed not to care how little or how much hair she had, he was always so enamoured with her. He walked over as she approached him, a warm smile on his face. Richie found it amusing to see the two of them so close. Especially, he enjoyed watching Mike Wheeler melting in her very presence. He thought so highly of her and it was obvious.

“Richie, I think we might have a problem.” Stan said from the wheel area.

“Already? We just left the dock!” Richie sighed heading up to where Stan was.

Looking up at the clouds in the distance, Stan pointed, “There’s dark clouds up ahead. We might be in for a storm.”

Richie assessed the clouds ahead of them for a moment. “We’ll make it to Jetta instead then. Tell Hanlon where we’re headed next. The storm will most likely pass before we reach it anyhow.”

“I don’t know, this looks like a big storm. I keep seeing lightening. Are you sure we shouldn’t just stay in Pavlovia one more night?” Stan told Richie concerned.

Richie sighed, “Well, I don’t think it’ll be too bad. if it gets bad, we’ll have to get our rigging team on it.”

Stan looked concerned but said nothing more as he returned to Mike Hanlon’s side. Richie looked at Will, “How bad could it be?”

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“This is your fault! You cursed us!” Stan shouted as he ran around the deck with the others, trying not to fall off balance as the ship rocked violently from side to side in the harsh water.

The rain beat down on them, threatening to capsize the ship. Bill Denbrough, Dustin Henderson, and Lucas Sinclair got to work on the rigging with Steve Harrington running around fetching them what ever tools they needed to accomplish the task.

Richie grabbed one of the ropes to keep the sails in line. “This isn’t my fault, you asshole! I can’t control the fucking weather!” Richie shouted at Stan as Mike Wheeler grabbed Stan around the waist to keep him from falling overboard.

The storm had come on strong. They had been within an hour from Jetta when the storm hit them hardest, but Richie and the others lost track of time as they did everything they could to keep the ship

sailing on course.

Mike Hanlon manned the wheel, the waves and rain crashing against him as he gritted his teeth, attempting to keep the wheel where it needed to be. Stan attempted to assist the riggers, but with his body weight, he stood no real chance at helping anyone. He wasn't muscled or heavy enough for the job to work out in his favour.

"This is no time for arguing! Stan, get below deck!" Mike Wheeler told him seriously.

"No, I'm not leaving Mike." Stan shook his head.

"Get down below or I'll drag you there myself!" Mike Wheeler threatened.

"That's sexy, Mike, you should talk like that more often." Richie shouted over the storm, but his cousin ignored him.

Stan huffed with annoyance as he headed for the lower deck. Jane headed out of the doorway, passing Stan as she clung onto the side of the ship. "Mike!" She called towards Mike Wheeler nervously; he had told her to stay in their cabin, but she refused when the storm started to rage stronger.

"We've got a leak down below!" Max shouted peaking out from behind Jane, "Come help us!" She called for Stan, reaching her arm out for him to take it as they headed down lower.

A beam from above came loose, Richie tried his best to dodge it, holding tight on the rope. He noticed it heading straight for his cousin instead. "Shit! Move Mike!" He yelled for his cousin, but it was too late, Mike Wheeler was thrown over the side of the boat by the large plank of wood that swung right for him.

Richie was about to let go of the rope, jeopardizing everyone when Jane ran to the edge of the boat, holding out her hand, fingers to the sky, palm flat. Richie watched with amazement as Mike Wheeler was levitated to the deck, soaked, and passed out from the impact of the heavy wooden beam that collided with him.

Jane wiped her bleeding nose on the back of her hand before running

over to the collapsed Mike Wheeler. Richie watched as she blew air into his mouth before pounding on his chest repeatedly. He spit up water, groaning with confusion as he realized they were still in the storm. “Mike…” she said softly.

“Jane?” He asked weakly.

She smiled gently at him. “Get him below deck!” Richie yelled to her.

Jane looked back, nodding before she pulled Mike up by both hands, leading him towards the lower portion of the ship. Richie held onto the rope, feeling relieved it was just him, the riggers, and Mike Hanlon controlling the wheel.

Below deck was a mess, there were so many leaks popping up, Ben was at work, trying to repair them, but there was only so much he could do. Will got to work hammering down some wood in places needing the most repair, but it seemed almost useless as another leak would spring nearby.

“We’re almost out of spare wood!” Will called out.

“I know! Just try to make it work as best as you can!” Ben called as he and Beverly worked on a large hole together.

The boat made a loud whining noise before finally the bottom of the boat seemed to be sliding towards land. “Where the Hell are we, now?” Will asked.

“Jetta I hope.” Stan said. “I’ll get the anchor lowered, we need to take refuge for the night.” Stan said before running up to the deck.

Richie nearly ran into him on his way down, but the two passed each other carefully. “Guys, we’re in Jetta.”

“Thank God…” Beverly sighed.

“This ship is taking on water… I’ll have to fix it for real in the morning when I have better supplies.” Ben said to Richie.

“Thankfully the other ships have made it to the shore. We’re all accounted for at least. Tomorrow we’ll check out the market place for

supplies.” Richie told them.

“I want to get some of these holes patched up now before any of the cargo gets damaged.” Ben told him seriously.

“Don’t worry about it now, it’s food we can replace here in Jetta if it spoils. Get into your cabins and get some rest. You’ll need it.” Richie turned to Eddie who was covering two holes with his hands aimlessly. “Kaspbrak! Go check on my cousin before you return to your cabin! He got hit by a beam.” Richie told his crew surgeon.

Eddie nodded, running up to the second level to make sure Mike Wheeler was holding on strong. When everyone else headed to their cabins, Richie opened the door, letting Will inside.

Will looked to Richie who was soaked. “Thank God our cabins are on level two, not sub level…”

“All the cargo though… it will hopefully be safe…” Will responded as he and Richie removed their wet clothes, climbing into the bed together.

Will held onto Richie, warming each other as they embraced. Richie’s teeth were chattering, normally he was the warmest of the two. Will rubbed his arms. “You’re freezing…”

“I’m ok.” Richie shook his head, but Will pulled another warm blanket over him, cuddling into Richie. “Thank you.”

Will nodded, kissing his forehead, “Get some rest ok?”

Richie smiled a little, nodding. The two of them slowly drifted off, not waking even once until the morning came. Richie sneezed a few times off to the side of his bed, Will rubbed Richie’s back gently. “Hey… are you ok?”

“I’m fine…” Richie’s nose sounded stuffed up.

“Richie, you sound sick.” Will told him.

“I’m never sick. I’m fine.” Richie lied.

Will rolled his eyes, “Stay in bed, I’ll get you something to eat, and I’ll go to the market for what ever we need.”

“I’m fine… I swear.” Richie cleared his throat before sneezing again.

“Richie, don’t fight me on this. Just lie still.” Will got out of bed, covering Richie in as many layers as he could; Richie’s red nose told Will all he needed to know about his current state.

Richie nodded reluctantly, laying still as Will pulled dry clothes on. Many members of the crew were headed to the dining hall the same time as Will. “Where’s Richie? Is he ok?” Beverly asked concerned.

“He’s got a bit of a sickness from the storm. Nothing serious, but I’m going to have him rest while I take on his usual jobs for the day.” Will informed her.

“Alright, you’re bringing him food I take it?” She smiled.

“Yeah, I’ll see if Georgie can put on some tea as well for Richie.” Will nodded to her.

“Richie’s sick? So is Bill, Dustin, Lucas, and Steve. I’ll have to pay him a visit too.” Eddie said from the table as he ate without Bill for once.

“Richie is sick as well?” Jane asked looking up as Will entered the dining hall.

“Richie has a cold. How’s Mike?” Will asked Jane as she piled some food onto a plate that didn’t seem to be for her.

“He is sick. He can’t breathe through his nose. He keeps coughing, and sneezing.” Jane explained to Will in her quiet voice.

“I’ll tell Georgie about it when I talk to him about tea… maybe he can watch them while we’re at the market.” Will told Beverly.

Bev nodded, as Georgie walked into the dining hall with the final tray of food. Will spoke to him about putting on some tea. It seemed about a handful of men on the ship were sick, so Georgie was at work making some mint tea with the tea leaves they obtained from Palma

on their quick mission there. Will put together a plate of food for Richie before bringing it to the cabin.

“Hey.” Will greeted Richie with a smile, “How are you feeling?”

“Terrible…” Richie groaned softly, “Damn storm…”

“I know… your cousin is sick too. So are the bards by the looks of it.” Will handed Richie the plate, watching him sit up, the pillows behind his back, “Georgie is putting on some mint tea for you, so be sure to drink it when he comes by. I’m going to go see what the damage of the ship is like, and then go with Ben to the market.”

Richie smiled a little at Will despite how awful he felt. “You really took this cabin boy job seriously. It should be me out there doing this today.”

“You need your rest, the sooner you get better, the safer the ship is. Eddie will be by later to check on you. Besides, I’ve been watching you for ages, I know what to do out there in your place.” Will assured him.

“Handsome, and intelligent.” Richie smiled at him taking a bite of his toasted bread.

Will smiled a little, “I learned from the best.”

Will returned to the dining hall once Richie was finished eating. He ate quickly with the rest of them before heading down to the lower portion of the ship. Though the holes in the bottom of the ship were a problem, they hadn’t taken on much more water in the night. The cargo was in good condition, they only had to throw away two barrels, one containing apples, the other containing some lettuce. It wasn’t as big of a loss as Will expected.

Ben led Will outside, the two of them looking at the outside damage. “It’s going to take some coin to fix this properly… Let’s hope Richie has enough.” Ben said looking a bit solemn.

Richie was fast asleep when Will returned to the cabin. He took Richie’s gold, heading outside with Ben. Since Pavlovia, they got a lot more coin on their hands, so Will was confident they would be fine

for money.

By the afternoon, Ben was back on his job of fixing the boat. They got a lot more extra wood as well just in case another leakage were to start. Georgie and Eddie both stopped by Richie's room. The only way Will could tell was by an empty tea cup, and the cool cloth on Richie's head as he rested.

Will sat on his side of the bed looking over at Richie, "Hey, we've got Ben working on the boat now." Will handed Richie back his coin purse.

"Oh, good. Did it cost much?" Richie asked sleepily.

"It was going to, but I offered blowjobs to the vendors, so that cut down the cost significantly." Will joked so deadpan that Richie looked at him for a moment, trying to figure out if he was kidding before he scoffed.

"You're a shit… No way would you do that…" Richie couldn't help but smile, making Will laugh at the goofy smile on his face.

Will shook his head, "It wasn't as bad as we thought, so the damages don't cost too much at all."

"Good. I hope my cousin is doing ok. Same with everyone else who's sick." Richie said before coughing a bit.

"It'll be ok. As long as you all rest, you'll heal up in no time." Will assured him.

"Eddie told me Bill is the same way… I guess everyone who was rigging got it the hardest." Richie said sniffling a bit.

"Mike Hanlon seems to be the only one on deck who didn't get sick. He just looks worn out today." Will told him, removing his boots to lie beside Richie.

Richie seemed to be more comfortable as Will rested next to him. "The day wasn't a total waste, we got extra ship supplies, and Ben has the boat repair under control." Will rested with his head on the pillow.

“Are you going to sleep?” Richie asked curiously.

“Only until dinner time comes.” Will assured him.

“I’ll wake you up if I smell food… or anything for that matter… I’ll just check my pocket watch…” Richie decided.

Will giggled, “Ok, Richie.” Will closed his eyes relaxing on his side, facing Richie.

The raven-haired man stared at Will for a long while. He was absolutely beautiful. Everything about Will just screamed perfection and he still wasn’t sure how they’d gotten together so easily, but he wished it had happened faster.

It was a strange thing for Richie. He still held Zachary in his heart, all the love he had for Zachary was separate, but he loved Will just as much. On a sad day, he might think himself a terrible person for letting himself move on so quickly, but he knew he was in love, without any means of stopping the way his heart pounded a little faster when Will entered the room.

Notes for the Chapter:

Leave me your love, and all of your money ;)

16. The Capture of Gretta Keene

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie and his crew arrive at Grenada Kingdom right after Gretta Keene is kidnapped by Henry Bowers. The crew sets off after them.

Chapter 16

It was taking almost a week to sail from Jetta to Grenada Kingdom. In that time, Richie had his best swordsmen on crew teaching Will how to use a sword while his best gunners taught Will how to use a gun. It seemed Will was better with a gun than a sword, as he hit targets from afar rather easily.

“Nice shot, Will!” Richie smiled as Will managed to pick off 6 empty wine bottles in a row without missing a shot.

Will smiled feeling proud of himself. Richie approached him, “You’re getting better each day, but I want you to remember though, when we’re fighting, I want you to stay as hidden as you can. I don’t want you rushing out into danger.” Richie told him seriously.

Nodding his head, Will knew a lot better than to do something so risky, “I won’t. I promise you that.”

“Good, then we won’t have any problems.” Richie adjusted his hat, looking out at the coast of land attached to Valora kingdom. Much of the area Richie was looking at remained uninhabited, but he still hated it knowing it was connected to such a foul place.

“Just a few more days and we’ll be in Grenada Kingdom, right?” Will asked looking out at the water around them.

“Yeah. I can’t say I’m looking forward to it. The princess there is a selfish bitch.” Richie sighed.

“The very same selfish bitch your father wanted you to marry.” Mike Wheeler spoke up from his spot by the edge of the boat as he fished for something for dinner.

“How’s nailing the bald girl going, Wheeler? Does she know about your bald fantasies yet?” Richie asked teasingly.

Mike looked back at him, “You stop that. She’s beautiful bald or not.”

Richie watched amused as Mike turned back around, blushing darkly, “Aww, what a cute virgin.” Richie smirked at his cousin’s back.

“There’s nothing wrong with being a virgin, Richie.” Will scolded him, “I think it’s sweet. You two have really bonded, I could tell by the way she tended to you when you were sick that she cares deeply for you.” Will smiled at Mike.

Mike nodded with a small smile, “She saved my life more than once… I hope I can pay her back somehow… someday.”

“Give her the dick, Michael. She’ll love it.” Richie said receiving a shove from his cousin.

Richie laughed as Will pulled him away, “You’re so mean to him.”

“It’s all in good fun. He knows it.” Richie assured Will.

Kissing Richie gently, Will looked out at the water. “What’s the plan for this Kingdom anyhow?”

“Well, I’m going to talk to the King and see about him agreeing to my terms of future laws. I want someone ruling who wants to follow my rules. They believe in slavery there, but not nearly as many slaves are brought to Grenada so my hope is that they don’t care enough to continue the slave trade. If they do, then I’m going to have to do something about it when I’m able.” Richie explained, an arm around Will as they stared out at sea.

“I hope they listen to you.” Will said softly.

“As do I.” Richie paused for a moment, “I don’t like the idea of having to take a Kingdom by force, but I will if I have to.” Richie sighed.

In the late evening just, a day before arriving in Grenada Richie and Will retired to bed early with the rest of the crew. Richie and Will

were already asleep when a knock at their door sounded. Richie grumbled, getting out of bed with just his pants on, opening the door to see Beverly with a finger to her lips to hush him. When she smiled, Richie stared at her confused.

“Go listen outside your cousins cabin for a moment.” Beverly whispered before heading off to her own cabin.

Richie signalled for Will to come over. Will was silent wondering what was going on. Richie led him down the second level hall, listening closely as he approached Mike Wheeler’s door. The faint sound of panting, bed creaking, and stifled female moans could be heard. Richie looked like he’d just won thousands of coins as he looked at Will excitedly.

“Get the bucket?” Will asked in a whisper.

Richie shook his head, “He won’t see this one coming…” Richie led Will back to their room to tell him the plan.

The entire crew met on the deck that following morning as Richie called them to an important mandatory meeting. Everyone stood up straight on the deck, arms folded behind their backs. When Mike Wheeler and Jane made their way onto the deck, holding hands, Richie began his speech.

“This is one of the first few mandatory meetings I’ve called and believe me, it’s an important one. We have to discuss the changes that are coming to pass, as well as our hopes for the future.” Richie started, a serious expression on his face as he looked around at his crew. “We’ve been through a lot together, but the biggest accomplishment I would like everyone to take notice of is the accomplishment of my very own cousin, Mike.”

Mike Wheeler looked a bit confused for a moment as he tried to think of anything that he had done recently that would warrant such recognition. “Everyone, please honour Mike Wheeler on his high achievement of finally getting laid!” Mike’s eyes went wide before flowers and flower petals were thrown at he and Jane from every direction.

“Happy deflowering!” Everyone shouted at them.

Jane looked to be unfazed, a small smile on her face as she held out her hands to cup the flowers falling on her. Mike Wheeler stiffly headed off the deck, making his way back to his cabin where Jane smiled, following him amused. “This ship hears everything, Mikey!” Richie called out.

Will couldn’t help but laugh along side Richie as the rest of the crew got back to work, a few of the bards taking on the flower clean-up. “Don’t you wish your deflowering had been as exciting?” Richie smirked at him.

“Of course, I can’t imagine why Mike is so embarrassed.” Will said sarcastically with a big smile on his face.

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When they got closer to Grenada Kingdom, everyone prepared for the worst. They didn’t know what would happen once they got there, but they were going to be prepared for anything. Will was forcibly geared up by Richie who insisted he wear all his gear as they ventured the water between Valora’s lands, and Grenada’s on their way to the kingdom.

Gretta Keene was one of the last people Richie wanted to see face to face. She was told to be a beautiful princess with radiant blonde hair, and big blue eyes. Most people left out her wide nose, her cruel near constant expression and the fact that she regarded everyone like they were below her. Richie sighed as he knew he’d have to deal with her rudeness once again.

“Hey Richie, you might want to come up here and see this.” Steve said climbing down from the crow’s nest with a microscope in hand.

Richie took the microscope, climbing up to see what Steve was referring to. Pulling the microscope up to his eye, Richie looked out towards the Kingdom of Granata, noticing plenty of soldiers and guards running around frantically. Looking out towards the water far ahead of them, Richie could faintly see a spec in the water that could have been another vessel. Richie pulled the microscope from his eye

before climbing back down. Will stared at him, waiting to hear what was going on, “Looks to me like the guards are running around looking for something… I’m wondering what’s happened.”

They pulled up to the docks, only to be interrogated as five other ships came up to the dock. “Why have you come at such a time? Also why with this crew?” One of the soldiers yelled at Richie, not seeming to care he was royalty to the neighboring country.

“I came to talk to the king. What’s going on here?!” Richie asked looking around as the guards surrounded him the moment he was off the ship.

“Drop your weapons. We will take you to the king if you have information.” The guard told him.

Richie promised to go to the king quietly so long as no one was hurt. Their weapons were confiscated which worried Richie as Will had no protection. He kept an eye on his boyfriend as the guard led them inside of the large castle completely unarmed.

The old sleazy King sat at his throne immediately when Richie was brought inside. “You do realize coming to Grenada is a dangerous idea?” King Norbert Keene asked looking them over, “You are wanted by the entire country of Valora.”

“I didn’t know that, but that’s good to know.” Richie said casually, “Now what the Hell is going on with this place? Why is everyone so frantic?”

The King sighed looking worried, “My daughter has been taken hostage by the new King of Tormund Kingdom, Henry Bowers. He is hoping that in doing this, I will lend him my armies to do with as he pleases. He plans to take over Valora Kingdom, therefore he feels Gretta is the perfect leverage. I either hand over my army, or my daughter will die.”

“Well… looks like I got here just in time.” Richie said pointedly to King Norbert who simply stared at him for a moment, “You would take Henry Bowers on to save my daughter?”

Richie nodded his head, “Yes. I will do it for free as well. All I ask is that after I have returned your daughter, you take some time to listen to what I came here to speak of, also of course… you let me and my crew leave in peace without alerting Valora Kingdom of my presence.”

The king nodded, “I agree.”

Just like that, the crew walked back to the ship, placing their gear back on their bodies as the ship set sail at full speed towards Tormund Kingdom. Richie turned to his companion, “Will… for this mission, I want you to stay on the boat.”

“Not happening.” Will said calmly in response to Richie.

Richie looked at him seriously, “You don’t know Henry Bowers, Will. He’s a monster. He loves to hurt people.”

“I can handle him.” Will said seriously.

“You don’t know what you’re asking…” Richie told him shaking his head.

Overhearing the argument, Ben approached, “Will, he’s being truthful… Henry tried to get weapons from my fathers shop when I was a kid. He wanted my father to give them the weapons for free just for being a prince. When my father refused, he waited until I had left the shop, and he attacked me.” Ben lifted his shirt, showing off an angry scar in the shape of an ‘H’ on his abdomen. He would have carved his entire name had my father and a guard not heard me screaming. He’s heartless and cruel, Will. He’d tear your eyes out just to watch you suffer.”

Will looked at Ben seriously. “So then, what am I supposed to do? Watch the ship? Sit around, be useless and hope I might see Richie again when me being there could have prevented his death?”

It was clear, Will was angry about this plan, but Richie just couldn’t allow anything to happen to Will. “You won’t be alone on the boat. Georgie, Stan, Jane, Holly, and Nancy will also be staying behind with you.” Richie told him.

“Richie… I can’t lose you.” Will said seriously.

“You won’t. Just trust me.” Richie looked Will in the eyes.

Will looked at him, sadness brimming in his eyes before he lowered his head, walking off to the cabin to be alone. He hated it. Tomorrow morning, he might see Richie for the last time. If Henry Bowers was really as crazy as they said, Richie would be in so much danger. Will could hardly stand it. He let himself cry silently.

Notes for the Chapter:

How are you liking the story so far? Let me know!

17. Weaklings Rise Up

Summary for the Chapter:

Will and the others left behind on the Raveness refuse to stand idly by when Richie and his crew don't return to the ships. Will and the other 'weaklings' decide to take action.

Chapter 17

Will watched as his love, and the rest of the crew went off into the darkness from the bank of the river. Richie had kissed him goodbye, reassuring Will to the best of his abilities that he would see him by dawn.

The five ships of the Raveness crew were docked about a mile away from the kingdom, in the hopes that they wouldn't be seen coming by the guards. Richie and his crewmates cut through the woods, in the hopes they might be able to sneak into the castle. That was the last time Will saw Richie. The dawn had come and Will had not slept, he simply stared out at the treeline waiting for Richie to return, but he never did.

Stan and Nancy were just as nervous as they waited to see if Mike Hanlon or Steve Harrington would return to them. The tall slender blonde stood by the ship wheel, biting his nails nervously as he stared out at the treeline. Will watched Stanley, knowing he was screaming on the inside fearfully. Jane was impatiently waiting, standing in the same spot she'd been in for hours, just waiting to see Mike Wheeler who had told her repeatedly to stay behind for safety, and to guard the ships.

"Why did they have to leave us here?" Nancy asked staring over the edge of the boat solemnly.

"They think we're too weak to fight." Will told her honestly, "They don't think we could actually help out there. We'd just get in the way somehow."

“What if they’re in trouble?” Georgie asked with sad eyes as he cleaned his hook off carefully with a rag.

“I guess we’ll never know unless they come back.” Holly said looking at Georgie sympathetically.

“They always leave me behind… just because I’m missing a hand… it’s not fair.” Georgie complained looking down.

“We have to go.” Jane said, determination in her voice.

Will looked up at her from where he leaned against the ship’s doorway to the lower portion of the Raveness. “They told us to wait… what if they come back while we’re gone?” Will asked.

Jane shook her head, pointing a finger to the sky, “It’s past dawn. They’re late.”

Will looked at her for a moment, knowing she was demanding what they were all thinking. “Maybe we should go after them.” Will looked around the ship at the crew members with him.

Nancy looked to Holly and Georgie for a moment, “This is dangerous. If you two don’t want to come, I don’t ask you to. If you do want to come though, then please do. These ships we’re guarding are useless without people to sail them.”

Georgie stepped forward, his hook held up, “I’m going.”

“Me too.” Holly nodded.

“Stan?” Will looked up at Stanley for a moment.

The golden blonde drew his sword, “Let’s go.”

Leading the way, Jane walked through the forest, heading in the direction Stan guided her to go. Holly was armed with a gun and a long thin knife that she hung from her hip. Georgie held a sword in his hand, using his hook to swat away the tall grass that touched his legs.

Will had his sword on his hip, but it was his gun clutched tightly in

his hand. Nancy walked next to Will holding a gun of her own. They were a sad looking group, Jane not even wielding a weapon; her mind was enough.

It was a wonder to Will why they hadn't brought Eleven along. She was such a useful person to have on their crew, yet Mike Wheeler spent all his time hiding her for her safety. If anyone needed to be protected, it was Mike Wheeler, not Jane.

When they reached the clearing, they peered out at the wall of the castle surrounding the huge kingdom. Immediately, horror caught their eyes. It wasn't so much the wall they were caught staring at, but rather the flayed men and women that were hung along the outside of the wall. "Oh my God, Richie why did you go in there…?" Will eyed the bodies along with the others.

Holly pressed her face in Georgie's shoulder out of pure shock, His hooked arm wrapped around her comfortingly until she was able to look despite her watery eyes, "Oh, no… this is suicide…"

Will looked to Jane who had a fire in her eyes, "No… it's not. We've just got to stick together, and we'll be ok." Will assured them.

"Look, you see that watch tower up there." Stan pointed towards a large wooden look out point, "We have to stay hidden from them. They know this castle is going to be under siege so they're taking extra precautions. They won't be expecting us per say… but we have to be tactful."

"Do you think we could get up into the watch tower? We'd be able to see what's going on in the courtyard at the very least." Will looked at the tall blonde.

"If we can get into the watch tower, we'd have quite the advantage. We could even sneak into the castle in less guarded paths." Stan said thoughtfully before turning to Will. "Everyone, how should we do this? There's only one guard up there… we'd still have to take him out carefully as to not alert other guards."

"Our guns are too loud… sure, we could probably peg him off, but it would alert others to our location." Nancy reasoned with them.

“I could snap his neck.” Jane said calmly.

“With your mind, right?” Will asked, watching her nod, “Alright… that might be the way to go. He’d collapse, hopefully out of sight, and we’d be able to climb up into the structure.” Will looked up at the enclosed look out post.

“Climb? How?” Georgie said holding his hook up pointedly.

“Cut down the bodies in our way, then help each other up. That might be the only way.” Stan suggested.

Will looked over at Jane, “Do you think you can snap his neck from here?”

Jane looked determined, her gaze set on the man in the watch tower. Will watched the man standing there carelessly one moment, before his head cranked to the side the next, falling to the floor out of sight. Will looked at Jane, “You did it.” He said watching her wipe the blood from her nose on the back of her hand.

“Let’s go.” She said stepping out of the forest, leading the way towards the area behind the castle outlook.

The dead bodies even hung on that side of the building, many of them ripe with flies and maggots. Nancy covered her nose and mouth, “God, this is disgusting…”

“I know… but we have to do this.” Will said confidently, drawing out his sword to cut down the noose that hung one of the bodies not crucified to a wooden post.

“Who goes first?” Stan questioned.

“I’ll go.” Will nodded, climbing up the wall with a boost from Stan, and Jane’s telekinetic abilities.

Once Will was onto the guard post, he looked into the courtyard. There wasn’t a single living person there, but what Will did notice was the types of execution methods the king had been using. Pools of blood covered a chopping block used for beheading. There were pikes bloody from impalement, and the gallows.

Will had never been in a king's courtyard before, but something told him the amount of death devices below was uncommon.

The others eventually made their way up to where Will was standing. Each of them taking their time to assess the courtyard below. "Look… there's bars down there at the bottom of the castle walls. That's got to be the dungeon." Nancy pointed out. "Let's take a look and see if they're in there."

Will knew it was a strong possibility that was where they were, but it was something he didn't want to think about. If there were that many bodies outside the castle as well as in the courtyard, he couldn't imagine what the dungeon was like. He didn't want anyone he cared about within those walls. The group climbed down together, wandering over to the bars along the bottom of the brick castle walls. Peering inside first, Jane squinted into the darkness. "…Mike?"

There was silence before finally, someone approached the bars, "Jane?" It was Mike Hanlon, not Mike Wheeler as she hoped.

"Yes. Where is Mike? Where is Richie?" She asked.

"It's hard to say… they're not down here…" Mike informed her, his dark eyes looking up at her.

Will leaned in, "Are you all alright? Is anyone hurt?"

"We're alright, but for how long is the question. Henry Bowers is a maniac. There's death everywhere in this place." Mike informed him.

"Nancy? You should get out of here!" Steve called from behind him, before making his way over to the bars.

Nancy looked at Steve who was sporting a bruised left eye. "I won't. We're getting you out of here."

"It's too risky. They're going to kill Mike, and Richie soon." Steve told them.

"Where?" Will and Jane asked at the same time.

"In the courtyard. I guess that's where he likes to do his executions.

After that, its all of us, one by one." Mike spoke up.

"No." Jane said before staring at the bars between the dungeon and the rescue team.

With a jerk of her head, the bars were pulled from the stone with far more force than any human could manage. "Come out. We fight." Jane said before standing up.

"They've already defeated us once. How do you think we'd stand a chance a second time? They've got an entire army at their disposal."

"Poison." Stan said suddenly, making everyone look at him.

"One of us goes in, poisons the water supply." Stan stated seriously.

"Yeah, how do you hope for us to do that?" Will asked him knowing how unlikely it would be pulled off without a hitch.

"I know it sounds crazy, but if we poison their water, and get out of there with our crew, and Greta, we've done all we needed to here." Stan stated.

"Does anyone here know exactly WHERE their water supply is?" Will questioned.

"I do." Dustin's voice spoke from the dungeon window.

"How would you know that?" Lucas asked in the darkness.

"I used to live here. My father was part of this army before he was killed. I've been here in this castle before, my mother was a servant before she was also killed. I helped her a few times. I know where everything is. I can help." Dustin said confidently.

"Yeah, you'll end up getting yourself killed, so that's a no." Steve looked back at him.

"Well, does anyone else know the inside of this castle?" Dustin asked around, only to have silence follow his question, "Exactly what I thought. So you're going to have to risk it." Dusting stuck his hand out the window, "Someone pull me out. I'm going in."

“Do we even have poison?” Will looked around shocked to see Georgie Denbrough of all people holding up a small pouch he hung from his belt.

“You have poison? Why?” Will asked confused as he opened the pouch to see some toxic mushrooms in the pouch that looked to be weeks old, and moulding.

“Sometimes I pick them.” Georgie said without giving any more context. As everyone stared at him, waiting for an explanation Georgie looked down, “It’s not easy living with one hand… I know I’m pretty useless, that’s why I have the easiest job on the ship and that’s why no one takes me with them on any missions. I keep these mushrooms in case I ever get brave enough to end it all…”

The information broke Will’s heart, he wasn’t expecting it that was for sure. “I had no idea you felt that way Georgie… I’m so sorry.”

“Georgie, you’re not useless.” Bill’s voice came from the hole in the wall. “You’re anything but…”

Georgie looked into the hole at his brother who was staring at him teary eyed, “Bill? I’m sorry…” Georgie looked down, his eyes watery, “I never meant to get caught.”

“Georgie, you can’t die.” Holly Wheeler spoke up, placing a hand on the arm wielding the sharp hook, “We need you. All of us do. You’re such a sweet person, we’d lose a little bit of sunshine without you here.”

Georgie looked at her for a moment, wrapping his arms around her. They embraced for a moment, silence filling the air. “Look, I don’t mean to interrupt a sentimental moment, but… someone get me out of this dungeon, so I can go poison this asshole’s water supply.” Dustin said from the dungeon.

Will wrapped a hand around Dustin’s and attempted to pull him from the dungeon, Jane using her mind powers to help him out. “We need a disguise…” Stan said before heading over to the guard tower to retrieve the one off the guard Jane killed previously.

Dustin took the pouch of mouldy mushrooms, tying it to his belt before waiting for Stan to return with the dead guards clothing. “Alright, we need to find Greta as well…” Will reminded.

“I’ll poison the water supply, and I’ll look for her next.” Dustin told the group.

“Dustin.” Steve spoke before climbing out of the hole onto the courtyard grass.

“Yeah?” Dustin looked at him curiously.

“Be careful.” Steve said to him seriously.

Nodding his head, Dustin wrapped his arms around Steve, “I’ll come back I promise.”

“Everyone else, out of the dungeon, now.” Will said to them.

Holly looked around for a moment, “Wait… I hear something…”

Everyone in the courtyard shrunk against the wall as two guards came out to the courtyard. They walked over, looking up at the watch tower, realizing something was wrong. Will jumped when both of their necks cracked loudly, Jane wiping her nose immediately after as blood dripped from it. Stan looked over, “Two more outfits… who’s going in with him?” Stan asked looking around as everyone began climbing out of the dungeon.

Will looked around, “I am for sure.”

“Me too.” Jane spoke before Will shook his head.

“No… I have a better idea for how you can help.” Will said to her as a plan began forming in the back of his head. “Lucas… you come with me.” Will looked back at him, “I could use two rogues for this.”

“What’s the plan?” Jane asked.

Will watched as the final person came out of the dungeon before he signalled for everyone to crowd around him. It was time for Will to call the shots.

Notes for the Chapter:

Thoughts? Feelings? Leave em here!

18. Will Byers: Temporary Captain of the Raveness

Summary for the Chapter:

> Will Byers and the Raveness crew have their stand off with the king of Tormund, Henry Bowers.

Chapter 18

Richie wasn't aware of what was going to happen to him as he and his cousin resided in the crow's cages hanging above the throne room. There were several corpses dangling along side them in similar cages. Richie wasn't entirely certain he was going to get out of this one.

How could his army have been beaten by the likes of Henry Bowers? Worst of all, his men, the ones still alive, were going to die immediately after watching him and Mike Wheeler's beheading. A beheading would have been merciful in comparison to what that meant from Henry Bowers. That monster enjoyed listening to the tortured yells and cries from his prisoners as Richie and Mike had discovered the previous night.

Four of Grenada's soldiers that had tried to stop Henry from capturing Greta had been tortured to various degrees below them until late in the evening. Mike had vomited upon witnessing one of the men as his skin was slowly removed in front of the others. The other four deaths were just as gruesome. Richie remained silent, staring at the torch as it burned against the stone wall.

Richie thought about Will, he thought about how beautiful Will was and how much he loved him. It made his heart ache knowing he might never get to see him again. This was his own fault and now everyone he loved would suffer for it.

He and Mike were left alone after the final man below was mutilated to death. "Richie…?" Mike looked over at his cousin, a sadness in his voice.

"Yeah, Mike?" Richie looked at him sadly.

“I’m sorry…” Mike looked down.

“For what? This isn’t your fault. It’s mine.” Richie told him seriously, “I tried to play the hero, but I’m really not as lucky as I thought.”

“No… I got caught by Bowers… had he not bested me in a sword fight, we wouldn’t be in these cages, and our men and women wouldn’t be in the dungeon… I messed up.” Mike closed his eyes, tears leaking from the corners.

“Don’t say that, Mikey. It’s not your fault. You tried.” Richie looked at him sympathetically. “You did so good… he just had more training.”

“I… couldn’t let him kill Big Bill… he was going to…” Mike sniffled looking sad.

“I know. You did the honourable thing here. Don’t blame yourself. Never do that.” Richie shook his head.

Mike may have been the reason for their capture whether Richie wanted to admit to it or not, but he wasn’t in any better standings as he rushed in with all his men without a plan. “I should have brought her with us, Richie…”

Richie looked at him gently, “Jane?”

“Yes. She wanted to come with us… had she… we might have been ok…” Mike sighed, “I’ll never see her again.”

“I left Will behind… He trained so hard, especially with his guns and I was too afraid to bring him with us.” Richie sighed, “I hope he finds someone smarter than me…”

“You two are really going to have a pity party on what could be your last night alive?” A voice of an older man asked them from one of the cages far away.

Richie and Mike couldn’t see the man as he was squished into a small rectangular cage sitting down. “What the fuck else should we be doing? Planning our funeral parties?” Richie asked annoyed.

“Hey, I’m in the same situation as you. I’m not complaining though, this world is going to hell. Xanbar is run by a lunatic, Tormund is run by a lunatic, Valora is run by a tyrant, and Granada is run by a man with no sense of control over his own kingdom.” The man said with a sigh, “I’m looking forward to being free.”

“Who are you?” Mike asked after a moment.

“I’m Scott Clarke. I’m an alchemist of Xanbar. At least I was until the new King Patrick took over. I was his teacher. I regret teaching him anything now…”

“Yeah, well… maybe my sister won’t have to marry him now.” Mike decided.

“At least Nancy and Holly have a chance.” Richie nodded, “Good women, both of them.” Mike nodded.

Silence filled the air for several hours. The two of them waited, watching the sunrise peak through the top part of the castle windows. It wasn’t long after that Henry Bowers entered the throne room to mock them some more. “Ready to show your crew how a fearless pirate dies, Tozier?” He asked with a devilish grin on his face; pure evil on his face, madness in his eyes.

The cages were lowered by two of Henry’s soldiers. One was blonde with pale skin, the other a chubby man with brown hair. It seemed they did what ever Henry asked of them; they were loyal, how unfortunate. Richie was pulled from the cage by the blonde soldier, Mike by the brunette. “Let’s get out there, it’s time to show everyone how much of a bitch their leader is.” Henry grinned maniacally.

Mike and Richie looked at one another for a long moment before Scott Clarke was also let down from the cage. “As for this one… I think your refusal to teach me valueable information is a good enough reason to rip you limb from limb.” Henry glared at the older man with the moustache.

“I refuse to teach such a small man such power. I made that mistake once, it’s not to be repeated.” The man said, not appearing to care about the fact he was about to die painfully.

“I’ll show you power as I tear your teeth from your mouth, one by one.” Henry laughed as he began walking towards the courtyard.

The group walked together before the larger soldier’s stomach made an audible lurching sound. “Was that you, Belch?” The blonde soldier asked.

“Ugh… I don’t feel so good, Vic… Breakfast tasted a bit weird.” The man complained.

“It tasted fine, you just have a fucked up stomach.” The blonde stated.

“Would both of you idiots shut up?!” Henry snapped as they made their way to the courtyard.

Mike and Richie squinted at the same time as they were caught with a face full of sunshine. It might have been the last time they ever saw the sun, and part of Richie just wanted to break into tears. “What the fuck…. The dungeon…it’s…” Henry walked over to the sizeable hole in the dungeon wall where the window used to be.

The sun was blocked out as several people stood up around the edge of the courtyard walls. Richie was even more emotional as he realized his entire crew was standing up, wielding stones, ready to throw them at anyone below. Nancy, Will, and the gunners of his ship stood along the wall, guns aimed at Henry, “Let them go.” Will said in a commanding voice.

“Will!” Richie’s eyes lit up.

Henry looked around wide eyed, “Shit…”

Belch grabbed his stomach with both hands, his sword falling to the ground with a clatter. Mike Wheeler looked down to see the soldier holding him wreathing with pain, meanwhile the soldier holding Richie didn’t look to be in good shape either. Victor appeared to be sweating profusely, his eyes having issues focusing, “Henry… I don’t feel right…”

Richie watched the blond fall to his knees on the stone below. “Now isn’t the time!” Henry shouted at them, his own stomach lurching.

“How was the poison, boys? Did it taste alright?” Dustin asked from the wall with a dark expression on his face.

Henry looked around, “My men will kill you for this! Your skin will burn off your bodies when they find you tried to kill me!”

“There was no try. You’re dead Henry Bowers. You did this to yourself when you captured this crew. Now you die, painfully like all your victims.” Will said looking him over without remorse. “Mike, Richie, move.” Will said watching the cousins flee towards the walls, Mike pulling Scott Clarke with him.

Henry attempted to run towards a wall but he was pelted with stones from every direction. As he darted for the doors to the castle, Jane forced them shut with her mind, locking him out of his safe haven as more rocks hit him from every direction around him. “Stop! Please!” He shouted desperately.

Richie watched with shock as his men and women continued to hit Henry with rocks, his skin tearing, bruising, and bleeding before his eyes. “Stop!” Henry shouted again.

Will looked towards the gunners, nodding his head as they aimed before firing their shots into Henry’s back. Collapsing to his knees on the ground, blood poured from his mouth. “Ngh…” He couldn’t form a single word as he wreathed on the ground for a several seconds before his moving ceased entirely.

Everyone lowered their weapons, noting the two soldiers were foaming at the mouth, a distant expression in their eyes as they were seeing their final moments along with their king who appeared to already be dead on the ground below them. Richie, Mike, and Scott Clarke moved away from the wall, looking up to Will and Jane who stood side by side in front of the watch tower. “Will? You did this?” Richie looked amazed by the outcome.

“Well someone had to save you.” Will smiled a little, “Might as well be a ‘weakling’ like me.” He spoke pointedly.

Richie looked a bit ashamed, “I… I never meant-”

Will stepped down onto the courtyard ground, “I know. You were trying to protect me. You should know though, we’re capable. Especially her.” He nodded to Jane who was looking at Mike with concern in her eyes.

Jane cupped Mike Wheeler’s face gently, “Hurt?”

Mike took her hands, shaking his head with a small smile, “No. You saved me. Thank you.”

“We couldn’t find Greta… where is she?” Will asked Richie.

“She isn’t here. She’s been sent off to Xanbar… to that fucker Patrick. Since Nancy wasn’t available for marriage, Henry struck a deal with Patrick. A marriage to give Patrick more power for Henry to learn the ways of alchemy to become more powerful.” Richie explained, “We heard the whole story last night while some poor bastard got flayed alive in the throne room.” Mike looked sick at the memory of it.

“His plan fell through unfortunately for him. I refused to teach him a thing. I’m Scott Clarke, you can call me Mr. Clarke if you prefer.” The man with the moustache spoke looking around at them all, “Seeing as you lot are my saviours, I’d be willing to teach some of you boys and girls a thing or two as thanks for saving my life.”

Everyone was surprised to see someone so calm and collected after such a traumatic event. “That sounds great Mr. Clarke, but we’re sort of in a rush so we might not have much time to learn. We have to save Greta from Patrick.” Mike Wheeler spoke up after the older man spoke.

“Of course. I can show you the way if you need to. Xanbar was my home after all.” Mr. Clarke offered.

“You’re welcome to come along for the ride. Now everyone, I owe you all a great debt after this. I promise not to let you down again. For now, let’s get going.” Richie said to his crew before Jane opened the doors to the castle, allowing them entry inside once again.

Steve walked between Lucas and Dustin, looking to the curly haired man for a moment, “You know… I had no idea this is where you

were from, I thought you lived in Mikos your whole life."

"That's what I'd prefer everyone thought." Dustin said as he walked, "When I found myself all alone, I hopped on a ship, and I hid in a barrel of flowers until I was brought to Mikos. It was one of the first places we stopped, so I snuck away, and found myself living on the streets. I met Lucas not long after."

Steve smiled a little, "You just remember one thing: you and Lucas are family to me. You're never alone now."

Dustin smiled brightly at Steve, "Thanks, Steve."

"Yeah, you're one of us, no matter how annoying." Lucas smiled watching Dustin start laughing a bit.

Richie and Will walked beside each other quietly. There was a change between them, but Richie had yet to discover if it was a good or bad change. All he knew was, his boyfriend was as far away from being a slave as he had ever been in that moment. Will had become a leader instead.

Notes for the Chapter:

How did you guys like the chapter?

19. Grovelling

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie has to take some time to make things up to Will. It seems Will enjoys making Richie grovel.

Chapter 19

“Will just listen to me.” Richie held up both of his hands as he stood in the middle of the cabin with a fuming Will Byers glaring at him.

“No, I’ve listened to you for so long now and you still don’t get it. We’re all capable. You can’t just leave some of us behind because you think we’re too weak. We’re not. If it wasn’t for us ‘weaklings’ none of you would be alive right now and you need to see that.” Will pointed a finger at him.

Richie sighed, “I know… you’re not weak, none of you are. I just didn’t want anything to happen to you… same for my cousin with Jane.”

“Don’t you understand?” Will wasn’t yelling now, just looking at him with those big beautiful eyes close to tears, “I don’t want anything to happen to you either, Richie. Jane feels the same about Mike.” Tears slipped down Will’s face, and he wiped them away carefully, “Today I almost did lose you, because you made Jane and I stay behind with the others. I would have had to find my way in the world without you. That’s a lot to think about…”

Richie wrapped his arms around Will, wrapping him in a warm embrace, “I’m sorry… I really am.” Richie apologized, “I don’t ever want to put you through that again.” Richie rested his chin on Will’s head.

Will sniffled back his tears and sighed deeply. “From now on… no leaving me behind?”

“I’ll never leave you behind again. I promise.” Richie said sincerely as Will leaned back to look at Richie’s face.

“Good.” Will leaned in, pressing their lips together.

Richie cupped Will’s face, kissing him deeper. Will rubbed his shoulders, “Mm…” they broke the kiss, “We can’t. We’ve got a lot of work to do before we get to Xanbar.” Will said heading towards the door of the cabin.

“Wait, wait, wait…” Richie grabbed his arm with a shit eating grin on his face, “Who’s the fucking captain of this ship? I call the shots, don’t I? We’ve got time.”

“Well the captain of this fine vessel almost just got himself killed, and left his lover behind to fend for himself, so as far as I’m concerned, the captain is in the dog house for the night.” Will said before heading for the door again.

“Oh yeah? That’s how we’re going to play it?” Richie pinned Will to the door, “I almost die, and you hold out on me?”

Will turned to look at him, a glint in his eyes, “Yeah. You're not fucking me tonight. You can find someone else to do that with.”

Taking it to be a game, Richie smirked. “Oh, you’re fucking me and you’re going to like it.” Richie leaned in, pressing his lips to Will’s neck, listening to Will breathe heavier, his hands venturing over Richie’s torso gently.

“Mmm-mm.” Will shook his head, “No you get to make good use of your hand tonight.” Will pushed Richie off, a challenging expression on his face, “It won’t feel as good as my body, but you’ll make do.” Will opened the door he was pinned against, sending Richie flying into the hallway. “Go make sure to give a proper apology to your crew, then perhaps I’ll let you back in here for bed time.” Will closed the cabin door, locking Richie out.

Richie grinned a little, enjoying the game Will was playing. Sure, he actually was mad at Richie, but he was also ready to fuck, and Richie could tell. It was going to be hard containing his hard erection, but he managed to take a few moments before heading out on the deck, calling all of his crew over for a meeting as he stood above them. “Everyone? I’d like to have your attention for just a few moments.”

Everyone stood around Richie, looking at him curiously, “I made a mistake. A big mistake and it almost cost us our lives. For that, I can’t apologize enough. I’m so sorry for what I did, and did not do out there. I should have been better prepared and I should have guessed that Henry Bowers would have been prepared on his home turf for an attack. For that I am deeply sorry.” Richie looked around at all of them, “I hope you can forgive me and most of all, I hope you will still accept me as your leader.”

“We always will accept you as our leader, Richie. You made mistakes, we all do.” Bill Denbrough said, and arm around his little brother’s shoulder as Eddie stood next to him.

“Yeah, Richie. We aren’t naïve, this mission could kill us. It’s worth it to try.” Eddie spoke up.

“We love you, we’re not abandoning you. We wouldn’t be worthy if we did.” Beverly smiled up at him warmly.

“The important thing is, we learned from out mistakes. We won’t make them again.” Mike Wheeler spoke confidently as Jane held her arms around him from behind as she stared up at Richie warmly.

“From now on, we fight together as one. No more leaving people behind, we’re a team, an army. We can’t let anything stop us now.” Richie smiled around at them all, “This is the best crew I could have asked for. Now everyone, take it easy for the night. You’ve earned it. Tomorrow morning, all heads on deck, we’ve got an attack to discuss together.”

Richie climbed down to the main deck as everyone cheered excitedly. His cousin, Jane, Dustin, Lucas and Max were all gathered around Mr. Clarke who was attempting to teach them what he knew about alchemy. It was hard to say if any of them would be able to learn anything useful between then and when they arrived at Xanbar, but at least it would keep them entertained.

Heading down to his cabin, he tried the door to find it still locked before he knocked on the door, “Will? I apologized to them.”

“That’s good!” Will called back.

“So… can I come in now?” Richie asked.

“Not yet.” Will said making Richie feel even more confused, “I think you should bring me some wine, and bring me hot water for a bath.”

Richie ran his tongue along the top row of teeth, “Are you serious?”

“Oh, I didn’t offend you, did I? By giving you orders you don’t want to follow?” Will asked pointedly.

Richie rolled his eyes with a sigh, “I get, I’ll be back shortly.”

Beverly was one of the first people Richie saw as he made it to the deck, Ben of course being the second. “I thought you were going back to your cabin.” Bev smirked at him, clearly aware of the situation.

“I plan on it… as soon as Will unlocks the door.” Richie sighed, “I don’t blame him, I kind of deserve this…”

“You do owe him.” Bev nodded in agreement.

“What is he demanding?” Ben couldn’t help but smile.

“Wine, and a bath.” Richie said with a shrug. “After that I’m sure we’ll have some make up sex.”

“Richie, you poor man. He’s not going to let you touch him until he’s sure you’re suffering.” Beverly couldn’t help but laugh.

Richie looked at them for a moment realizing Bev was right, “Out of my way, I have wine to get.” Richie grumbled as he headed to the kitchen.

Georgie was in the kitchen with Holly who was helping him cook for the crew. “Oh, hi Richie. Anything you need?” Georgie asked with a smile.

“Just wine.” Richie said grabbing some off the counter as he watched Holly cut up some onions, her eyes tearing up, “Don’t worry, Holly. They’re just onions, they can’t feel a thing.” Richie teased.

Holly laughed looking over at him with watery eyes, “Thanks for the

advice, Richie."

"Anytime, it's what captains are for." Richie smirked before heading out of the kitchen with the wine in hand.

Knocking on the cabin door, Richie listened for Will, "I brought the wine."

"Leave it by the door, when you go for bath water, I'll bring it in." Will called out to him.

"Fine, princess. I'll be back with your fucking bath water." Richie grumbled before heading off towards the lower level of the ship.

Lugging two buckets of water up to the cabin, he noticed the wine was gone. He set the buckets down before heading back down for a third. Richie set the final bucket down by the door, "Here's your water, anything else you need before I can enter my own room?" Richie asked with bitterness in his voice.

The door unlocked, and Will opened it, wearing nothing at all, holding a goblet filled with wine. "Nope. That's it." Will smiled at him sweetly as Richie looked him over, "Thanks, Richie."

Bringing two of the buckets inside, Will reached for the final bucket. Richie poured the water into the tub, swallowing a bit as Will poured the final bucket of luke warm water into the bath tub. "So… mind if I join you?" Richie asked watched as Will added some flowers for scent.

"Well I could use someone to wash my hair…" Will smiled a little as he climbed into the tub, resting his back and arms against the sides.

Richie locked the door before kneeling behind Will. Sliding into the water further, Will wet his hair, allowing Richie to massage his scalp gently. "Mm…" Will sounded relaxed to Richie's delight as he enjoyed the scalp massage.

Once he sat up fully, his back resting against the tub, Richie began massaging Will's shoulders, "So… I've been thinking about how pissed you are and I can understand why… you don't have to have sex with me tonight if you don't want to. I respect your wishes."

Richie said gently kissing his cheek from behind, “I love you and I want you to know that how you feel is very understandable. I’d go nuts if anything happened to you too.”

“Thank you, I’m glad you understand.” Will held his eyes closed.

Richie decided he may as well accept the fate of the evening before getting his hopes up. He was already erect, but he was going to take care of himself after Will’s bath. “You know… when I was dangling in one of Bowers’ gross cages, I thought about you, and how bad I felt leaving you behind. I was scared I wasn’t going to get to say goodbye.”

Will looked over his shoulder at Richie, “I was scared I was going to be too late in trying to save you.”

“Turns out you have good timing.” Richie smiled gently, “You know… I really don’t give you enough credit. You’re so smart, Will. You’re good enough to lead them and you proved that today. I’m so proud of you.” Richie smiled warmly, kissing Will’s temple softly.

“Thank you, Richie.” Will smiled, his insides igniting with pride upon hearing Richie’s kind words about his leadership skills, “I learned from the best.”

Richie handed Will his goblet of wine, “Enjoy your bath, beautiful. I’ll be back.” Richie got up, one hand conspicuously concealing his boner.

“Where are you going?” Will looked a bit alarmed as he held his goblet.

“Oh, I um…” Richie shrugged, “Just giving you privacy.”

Will smiled a little, “You’re a shit poker player I bet.” He took a drink of his wine as Richie blushed a bit.

“Well… I didn’t really want to come out and say it, but I’m hard as fucking rock, so I better take care of myself.” Richie pointed to his groin.

“Oh, why not do it in front of me?” Will asked sensually.

“I… well.. I could I suppose.” Richie rubbed the back of his neck, “I just figured seeing as we’re having sex now… that might be weird?”

“Richie…” Will said in teasing voice, “Please do it in front of me…” Will purred, watching Richie squirm.

“Y-You!” Richie pointed at him, “Stop that! It’s embarrassing jerking off in front of someone else…”

“Oh, please Richie? For me?” Will asked in a breathy voice, just to taunt him further.

Richie huffed with annoyance. Pulling his erection out, Will shook his head, “Wait, what? I’m jerking off like you asked!”

Will smiled swallowing the wine in his mouth before he poured himself another cup, “Take your clothes off… slowly.”

Richie sighed, pulling his shirt off, tossing it aside. “Like that?”

Will nodded with a smile, watching Richie intently as he carefully slid his pants off, letting them fall to the floor. “Tada?”

Will giggled a bit, “Ok… start off slow…”

Richie was stiff as a board, his erection unable to get any harder even if he tried. Gripping himself, He closed his eyes as he began to slowly jerk himself off, rubbing from the base upwards and then back down slowly. “Mm…”

Finishing his wine with a final gulp before he set down the goblet, amused by Richie. Reaching into the water, Will gripped himself with one hand, rubbing himself, “Open your eyes… I like when you look at me.” Will purred watching Richie open his eyes, looking Will over desperately.

“Will… this is so weird…” Richie admitted.

Will smiled, climbing out of the water. Richie swallowed hard as Will grabbed the oil from the bedside table and approached him, dripping wet, “Did you want help?”

Richie looked him over with a grin on his face. “Oh, you fucking know I do…”

Will smiled, pouring a bit of oil on his hand, rubbing it in carefully. “Good… because I want to try something…”

Richie didn’t have time to question Will as their lips pressed together gently. Richie’s lips opened to accept Will’s tongue into his mouth. “Mm…” Richie relaxed, feeling Will’s hand on his balls.

After a moment, Will’s index finger slid against his back entrance. Richie grunted, realizing what was about to happen. Richie jerked himself, feeling Will insert a finger inside to rub at his prostate. “Mmm…” He whined into Will’s mouth as they kissed.

Will pulled back gently to look into Richie’s eyes, “How’s that?”

“You’re fucking sneaky…” Richie grinned, “Did you want to be inside of me tonight?”

Will smiled, “Mhmm.” He kissed Richie lovingly, inserting a second finger inside. “Oh fuck!” Richie moaned as Will found his prostate.

Leaning in, Will kissed Richie’s neck and shoulder area, enjoying the sounds of pleasure coming from Richie with each thrust of his fingers. “Will… I’m ready…”

“Are you sure?” Will asked as Richie let go of his erection, placing both hands on Will’s hips as he held him closer.

“Yeah I want you.” Richie kissed along his neck, enjoying the soft sounds coming from Will’s lips.

Will was excited, it was a new experience for him, but one Richie was comfortable with. Lying on his back on their bed, Richie pulled Will on top of him. Their kissing was loud, but very much passionate as they prepared for the exciting new thing they were going to try.

Richie grabbed the oil from Will, gently spreading it over his hand before he wrapped it around Will’s hard erection. Moaning softly, Will became harder as Richie rubbed him to full mast. Richie noticed Will’s arms were shaking a little; he was nervous despite his new-

found confidence. “Are you comfortable with this?” Richie asked him curiously.

Will nodded, “Yeah, I’m comfortable because it’s with you. I just… I’m scared I’ll hurt you…” Will said honestly as Richie lifted his knees.

“You won’t. If I need you to stop, I’ll stop you.” Richie assured him.

“Ok.” Will agreed, kneeling between Richie’s legs.

Carefully, Richie gripped the hardened erection of his boyfriend, before carefully slipping just the tip inside of himself. Will groaned softly, biting his lower lip, “Alright, you’re in now… just slide in all the way slowly…” Richie coached him.

Will pressed in a little deeper, a soft whimper escaping him, “I didn’t know how this would feel…” Richie moaned, his body allowing Will the rest of the way inside.

Lying over Richie, Will pressed his mouth to Richie’s neck. Sliding his fingers up and down Will’s face, Richie smiled, “Does this feel good?”

“Yes. So good, Richie.” Will kissed his neck slowly, still not thrusting his hips yet.

“You gonna fuck me or what?” Richie laughed a little.

Will hovered over him, looking him in the eye, “Yes, I’m just… getting used to the fact I’m inside of someone… it’s very new to me.” Will said before pressing their lips together, “This is a big deal for me.”

Richie looked at him gently, “I guess for you this is another step away from being a slave.”

Will nodded his head, “Yeah… but I think I’m ready to move now… so get ready.” Will said, making Richie want to laugh a little at how confident he sounded.

Rocking his hips back and then forward, Will pressed into Richie’s prostate. “Oh, that’s it…” Richie bit his lower lip, enjoying the feeling

of being submissive for once with Will.

Will moved at a steady pace, pleased sounds escaping him. “Richie…” Will breathed, leaning in to kiss him lovingly.

Richie ran his fingers through Will’s hair, “Mmm… you feel really good…”

Will smiled, nipping at Richie’s lower lip before continuing to perfect the angle of his thrusts. A loud moan escaped Richie, indicating he was hitting the right spot. “I love these sounds you’re making…” Will grinned, enjoying the feeling of Richie’s insides clenching around him hard.

Richie’s erection couldn’t get any harder as Will continued to thrust his hips hard into his prostate, “Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!” Richie cried out, gripping the bedding below him as Will became lost in the motions of fucking him.

“Are you close?” Will asked, a sensual breathiness to his voice.

“Yes, please keep going…” Richie’s eyes were like melted chocolate as he stared up at Will.

“Oh yes… I will…” Will thrust harder into Richie, enjoying the swearing moans that came from his boyfriend’s lips.

Richie’s back began to arch, the sounds of his pleasure filling the cabin, no doubt audible to the rest of the crew. “Will! OH fuck! Yes! Yes!” Richie cried out, his erection suddenly spewing semen as he came hard.

Will bit his lower lip, pressing deeply into Richie as he released, unable to hold on any longer. “Richie!”

Richie smiled as Will laid over top of him. “How does it feel being on top for once?” Richie asked stroking Will’s hair.

Will nuzzled Richie’s forehead with his, “I feel so good after that…”

Richie smiled, rubbing Wills hips gently, “Ready for a nice long sleep?”

Will kissed Richie lovingly, “Mm. I think so… let me just wash up first…” Will carefully slid out of Richie, sighing with relief.

Richie watched Will head over to the bath, carefully cleaning himself up. Getting under the blankets, Richie watched as Will approached the bed. Climbing in next to Richie, Will cuddled into his side. “I love you, Richie.”

Kissing his temple, Richie smiled, holding Will close, “I love you too, Will. Sleep well, tomorrow’s a big day.” Will closed his eyes with a smile, feeling well accomplished after the day he’d had.

Notes for the Chapter:

Thoughts? Feelings? Prayers? Leave them here!

20. Taking Xanbar

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie and his crew travel to Xanbar together with the intent on claiming it.

Chapter 20
Upon arriving at Xanbar, the crew of five ships was pretty sure they were entering a deserted island. Looking around, it didn't seem that there were any villages. The boats docked nearby were the only sign that anyone was even on the island. "What's going on here?" Richie asked as his crew surrounded him.

"Everyone is taking shelter. Everyone is afraid of what will happen to them if they step outside during the week days. This is common around here." Mr. Clarke informed him, "Every single person in this city only leaves their home only during the weekend days. Businesses here open for the day, and everyone is to shop while they can. Immediately after, everyone goes home, and secludes themselves in their homes before dark."

"Why?" Mike Wheeler squinted with confusion.

Mr. Clarke looked from Mike towards the castle far off in the distance on the other side of the market. "Because Patrick Hockstetter prefers to keep his people isolated, and afraid of being burnt at the stake in the center of town. If he sees people out in the streets outside of the hour they're able to leave home, he will kill who ever he sees. The monster likes to roam the streets with his guards, something he told me once leads me to believe he doesn't feel the people in the world he lives in are real, that he is the only real being. Now that his parents are dead, he has nothing to stop him from his delusions."

"He's a psychopath." Nancy glared at the castle, "A psychopath my father, and my uncle wanted me to marry in order to unite the kingdoms together."

Will listened, looking towards the pyre in the center of town. "We have to stop him."

Richie nodded looking at his boyfriend, “We will.”

“I think the only way is death…” Will said surprising Richie a little at his words.

“Well… yes. I think so too, but, you don’t have to worry about that, Will. One of us will get him.” Richie said, hoping Will wasn’t trying to take on the responsibility. “Who wants to stay behind and guard the ships?” Richie asked this time.

Mr. Clarke nodded to him, “I’ll stay.”

“Good.” Richie nodded, “Does anyone else wish to stay behind? Or are the rest of you coming with me?”

Holly looked to Nancy, but Nancy shook her head, “I’m going with Richie. I want him dead.”

“I’ll go too then.” Holly nodded.

Will looked at Richie, “Ready to go?” It seemed Will wanted to get started on their mission.

Richie nodded, “Yeah let’s go, everyone.” Something about Will’s eagerness bothered Richie. It wasn’t like Will at all.

Richie made sure a few other people from the other ships stayed behind as they headed towards the castle. Walking into the market with Richie, Will looked around at the buildings, noticing eyes peaking out at them from behind half closed shutters and windows. Richie kept an eye out as he ventured into new territory he’d never seen before.

“Will… stay close.” Richie said to him quietly.

Will nodded and made sure not to venture off. It was a big enough deal that Richie was taking him with him into battle. Will didn’t want to make it stressful by venturing out of Richie’s sight. He followed beside Richie, hoping they’d make it through the market without any unwanted surprises.

Heading towards the castle, Richie noticed the half up, half down

wedding decorations on the outside of the castle. “Well… looks like a wedding is in progress… anyone wanna go crash it?” Richie looked back at his crew following him.

Everyone looked ready as Richie and Will pulled the doors open. Guards rushed at them the moment the doors were open. A guard with a long sword charged towards Holly, only for Georgie to grab the sword with his hook, swinging it away from the guard before he ran the guard through with his sword. “Good job, Georgie.” Bill Denbrough looked shocked at his quick motions before he attacked a guard coming towards him.

Eddie stared wide eyed as a large soldier with a broad sword headed for him. He dived between the mans legs, cutting the backs of his legs with his sword before Will stabbed him in the chest without thinking twice about it.

Mike Wheeler slashed at the man attacking him while Jane used her mind to crack several necks of any attacking soldiers near them. Richie fought two soldiers at once, Will taking his gun, shooting one of them in the face before anything could happen to Richie. Once the other soldier was dead, Richie pulled Will to the side, out of sight, “What are you doing?”

“Fighting in a war. Got a problem?” Will asked with annoyance.

Richie cupped his face in both of his hands, “Stop. Please don’t do this… you’re killing when you don’t have to… let us d-”

“Do it for me? No thanks. I’m just as much part of this crew as anyone else here.” Will pulled Richie’s hands from his face, “Now let’s get back out there.” Will headed off, knowing Richie was hurt by his words.

Will shot at another soldier before using his sword on another that attempted to attack Ben while he was fighting another soldier. Richie couldn’t help but let the anger fuel him as he cut through more soldiers on his way inside.

Nancy, Max and Holly fired their guns at a large group of soldiers, watching them fall one by one. Beverly slashed a mans throat open,

blood coating her body as she moved on to help Ben fight off some more.

Will saw the soldiers dwindling down, and headed towards the inside of the castle, Richie by his side as they walked. The rest of the crew followed once their enemies had been slain, leaving the ground around the front of the castle stained crimson with blood.

Spotting two guards at the throne room doors, Will shot one while Richie stabbed the other, “Will, I could have done them both in myself…” Richie growled.

“Good for you. I can handle myself!” Will shouted back.

“Guys! Now isn’t the time.” Beverly interjected, watching the tension between the two rise.

Richie stared Will down, noticing that his former slave lover didn’t back down. “We’ll talk about this later.” Richie said before approaching the double doors, opening them to see Greta bound to the queen’s throne next to Patrick’s throne. “Well, well.” He smiled darkly, his pale blue eyes piercing through them as his greasy black hair clung to his face. “I wondered when my guests would show up for the wedding… although I did think Henry might have skinned you all by now.”

“Henry Bowers is dead.” Richie approached him, “You’re next.”

Greta’s large blue eyes stared over at the group entering the throne room. “Get me out of here already!”

“Silence!” Patrick waved a hand towards her, watching as her mouth closed, and she seemed unable to speak.

Patrick looked towards Richie, “Seems a little unfair for you to bring all of your men in here to fight me… shall we do this one on one?” Patrick didn’t seem intimidated in the least.

“Fine.” Richie said holding his sword in hand, looking at Will, “Go.”

Will eyed Richie for a moment before walking off to the side lines with his crew. Patrick drew his sword with a grin on his face. “Ready

to die, Tozier?"

"You fucking wish, dipshit." Richie said as he blocked Patrick's first swing.

The two sparred together, everyone watching from the sidelines. Will had a bad feeling in his chest that something was off. He clutched his gun tightly, watching Patrick very closely.

"How's your mother, Tozier? I guess you wouldn't know, she's been sleeping for so long now…" Patrick smirked darkly.

Richie slashed at him, "God, you have no decency, do you? No wonder you have to force women to marry you in order to get one."

Patrick slashed at Richie, but Richie managed to dodge it easily as he stepped out of the way of the blow. "Time to teach you a lesson in death…"

The moment Patrick reached into his pocket to toss down a flask, smoke emitting from it, blanketing the two men before them in a thick fog. Will raised his weapon only for Bill Denbrough to grab his arm, "No. He has to do this himself."

"Why?" Will glared at him, "We're pirates! Let's just kill him!"

Before Bill could answer the sound of someone getting stabbed caught their ears and a grunt followed by a gurgle sounded. Will stared wide eyed into the fog before a figure emerged from it. Richie emerged from the smoke, "We may be pirates, but we're not like every pirate. We have a code to follow, an honourable one. Now if you're going to question any more of my motives, do it later." Richie said sheathing his sword.

Will stared up at him before Greta interrupted his thoughts, "Get me out of here! I want to go home, immediately!" Greta shouted from the throne as she struggled in her bindings.

"Fuck, I was hoping the silencing spell would have lasted a little longer." Richie sighed before heading over to release her from the throne.

“Do you want us to raid the castle, and steal anything of value?” Mike Hanlon asked curiously.

“Not this time… this castle is now in the hands of an ally. We have to make sure they have what they need to run the place.” Richie said once Greta was free and heading for the door.

“Who?” Stanley couldn’t help but ask.

“I think the best person to run this place would be someone who is from here… Mr. Clarke would be perfect, especially as he is already an alchemist. We’ll go back to the ship and give him the good news.” Richie smiled, picking up the crown from Patrick’s corpse before heading out the door Greta passed through.

Will watched as Richie left without him. Inside, he knew he had been a bit out of line, but he wasn’t about to admit it. Following the others, he headed back to the pirate ship, feeling pleased the casualty list was low on their side.

Notes for the Chapter:

Leave me some love!

21. Captain

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie and Will discuss Will's recent behaviour in battle. Richie then proceeds to punish Will for his actions.

Chapter 21

Mr. Clarke was both pleased and honoured to be given the crown of Xanbar. It would be the first time in decades a sane man was on the throne. Mr. Clarke agreed to keep in correspondence with Richie so that they might be able to work together passing new laws. Mr. Clarke made an announcement to the people of Xanbar, providing them with the relief of knowing their lives were going to get better from there on out. Anyone who wished to join Richie's ranks was allowed to do so, but aside from a handful of people, everyone else decided to remain in Xanbar to celebrate the arrival of their new king.

In the meantime, the crew set sail for Grenada Kingdom to get Greta back home. She had shut herself in a cabin by herself, not wishing for anyone to speak to her other than to bring her food.

The crew celebrated together on the deck. Will had hidden away in the cabin, sitting with the remnants of his nearly untouched dinner on his plate as he thought about all the people he killed that day. Richie broke him from his thoughts as he entered the cabin. "Thought I might find you here."

Will looked up at him, "I sort of… want to be alone."

Richie cocked his head to the side, "I don't think so. We need to talk."

Will looked away quickly. "About what?"

"About you killing people just to kill people." Richie started, "I get you were trying to help, but you were trying to prove a point, a point

that didn't need to be proven. I know you're strong and capable, but your kill count doesn't rely on that to be true."

Will's eyes grew sad, "I just didn't want you to think you had to worry about me…"

"That's not possible. No matter how strong you get, I'm going to worry. I'll always worry, because I love you." Richie told him honestly.

Will looked up at him, "I love you too."

"Good." Richie changed his tone, "Now it's time for your punishment."

Will looked at him confused, "What? Why?"

Richie raised a brow, taking his hat off, placing it on the table next to him. "Do you think it's a good idea to challenge your captain in front of the entire crew like that? Take your pants off and lean over the table." Richie watched Will blush darkly.

"You're serious?" Will swallowed.

"You're questioning your captain far too much." Richie looked him over, "I might have to punish you For that as well."

Will blinked, "Richie, you-"

"You will refer to me as 'captain' until I feel like you've learned your lesson." Richie spoke, a hint of a small smile on his face, making Will wonder if he was serious or not.

Will stood up slowly, undoing his pants with a little bit of confusion. He didn't understand what was going to happen exactly, but he figured he may as well comply. Placing his hands on the table, he leaned over it, looking over at Richie with wonder.

Richie approached Will, pressing on the place between his shoulder blades to keep Will pinned down before his free hand gently rubbed his ass, "I would appreciate an apology for disobeying me."

“Richie, I-” A slap to his ass made him gasp as he realized what Richie had in mind.

“It’s, Captain.” Richie reminded.

Will felt his erection forming between his legs as he listened to Richie’s commanding tone. “C-Captain, I’m sorry for disobeying.” A slap to his other cheek sent a jolt through him.

“Are you sorry for talking back to me in front of my crew?” Richie asked before smacking his ass again, listening to Will whimper below him.

“Yes, I’m sorry for talking back in front of the crew. I shouldn’t have done that. You’re the captain.” Will said, wishing he could reach between his legs to touch himself.

“You think you’re so tough, but something tells me you’ll beg me to stop soon…” Richie said slapping his ass three times in a row, listening to Will gasp and groan below him, “Going forward, when your captain speaks, what are you going to do?”

“Listen.” Will responded in a quiet voice.

Richie smacked his ass again, “Louder.”

“I’ll listen!” Will said gripping the table.

“Will you continue to question your captain’s motives, or will you let me lead you where we need to go?” Richie asked smacking his ass again.

“I’ll let you lead. I won’t question your motives again. I promise.” Will felt his eyes tearing up as the sting of another smack hit his pale flesh.

“Are you going to be a pissy bitch when I tell you not to do things out there from now on?” Richie asked smacking his ass twice in a row, listening to Will whimper and groan.

“No, I won’t. I’ll listen.” Will said in a soft voice.

Richie gently rubbed Will's red ass, enjoying the hand prints left behind. He glanced down noticing the stiffness of Will's penis. Richie slid his fingers down towards Will's opening. "Are you ready to please your captain?" Will bit his lip, nodding his head in response.

"Good boy…" Richie knelt down behind Will, spreading his cheeks before running his tongue along his opening.

Will let out a loud whimpering moan before looking back with surprise. "Oh my God!" Will bit his lip, feeling Richie's tongue pressing into him a little as he licked. "Captain! Please fuck me!" Richie couldn't help but enjoy the fact that Will was still addressing him so formally despite what they were doing.

Richie ensured Will was completely lubricated before he stood up, inserting himself deeply inside of Will. The blonde was mush as he gripped tightly around Richie's erection. "Fuck, I love your tight ass…" Richie gripped Wills hips, thrusting hard in and out of him, making sure to put extra focus on Will's prostate.

"Captain! OH yes!" Will moaned, his penis dripping precum on the floor of the cabin.

Richie reached around to grab Will's leaking penis, "You're making a mess on my cabin floor…" Richie thrust hard into him, rubbing Will's erection.

"I'm so sorry! So sorry captain! I'll clean it!" Will moaned as Richie continued to fuck him against the table.

Richie groaned as Will's insides milked him thanks to how aroused Will was. "Fuck… you better clean it… as your captain, I expect the best…" Richie panted heavily, slamming hard into Will, as he continued to rub his erection.

Will began dragging his nails along the table, his panting growing more laboured as he was building up rather quickly under Richie. Whimpering with each thrust, Will focused even more on Richie's hand on his straining erection.

"Can I come? Can I please come?" Will begged as Richie pounded

into him mercilessly.

“Only if you scream your captains name while you come…” Richie growled pumping Will’s erection faster with his wrist.

“Oh! Richie! Richie! Yes!” Will screamed out, his insides clenching around Richie pleasurably tightly before he climaxed hard into Richie’s hand, “Oh…”

Richie felt his eyes crossing as Will gripped around him tightly, pulling his climax from him. Richie released hard into Will, shooting several ropes of come inside before Will loosened enough for Richie to pull out of him.

“Fucking Hell…” Richie groaned, sliding out completely, “You’re fucking good…” He caught his breath as Will remained limp leaning over the table.

Will attempted to stand up, “I-I’ll clean the come off the floor…” Richie watched as Will grabbed a rag and nearly fell on the floor as he attempted to kneel down.

Richie grinned, pulling him up, removing Will’s shirt so he was completely naked now. “Go lie in bed. That was pretty intense.”

Will nodded, blushing as he headed over to their bed, lying on his stomach. Richie removed his clothing, lying next to Will. “Was… all of that just a game?” Will asked.

“Yeah. I wouldn’t ‘punish’ you for real.” Richie told him, “Not after the past you’ve had.”

Will nodded with a small smile as he moved so he could lay half on Richie’s chest, “I… like it. A lot.”

Richie smiled, pressing a kiss to his forehead, “You’re a kinky little minx, I love it!” Richie grinned.

Will looked at Richie thoughtfully for a moment before turning his hand, blushing a bit. “What?” Richie looked at him amused, “What is it?”

“You… did something… different…” Will struggled to get the words out, his face going even redder as he avoided eye contact.

“Did I?” Richie stared at Will, amused.

“With your mouth… I… I don’t know what you did but… I didn’t know people did that…” Will avoided eye contact.

Richie lifted his chin with a finger, making Will look at him, “Are you embarrassed?”

“No… well… kind of… should I not talk about it?” Will questioned.

Richie laughed, “You’re cute. You’re allowed to talk about it if you enjoyed it.” Richie eyed him, “Did you enjoy it?”

Will nodded, “Yeah. It felt weird though, but in a good way.”

Richie pulled him closer, “Does this mean you want to kiss me now?” Richie teased wiggling his tongue in front of Will as Will struggled giggling.

“No! Stop it!” Will laughed.

“Come on, its not gross!” Richie smirked.

Will rolled off Richie only to have Richie roll on top of him, pinning him down, “Come on, just one deep kiss.”

Will giggled loudly, “Keep your ass-lips away from me!”

Richie laughed, immediately tickling his sides. “Well if you won’t kiss me, at least help me run us a bath.” Richie suggested.

“Alright.” Will smiled up at him, watching as Richie rolled off him before standing up.

***

The following morning, Richie and Will were greeted by giggles, and various dramatic recounts of his and Will’s kinky sex from the night before. “Yes Captain! Anything you say Captain!” Max shouted at

them.

“Please, spank me Captain!” Beverly called out only for Richie to smack her ass on the way by.

“Who am I to say no to that?” Richie waggled his brows despite Will’s vibrant red cheeks.

Mike Wheeler couldn’t help but laugh with amusement as they made their way onto the deck, “You do realize we can hear everything that happens on this ship loud and clear, right?”

“I realize.” Richie nodded.

“Well… I hope you enjoyed your spanking from Richie.” Mike said to Will who was half covering his red face.

Jane furrowed her brows with confusion, “What is… spanking?”

Mike immediately went pink in the cheeks, “Oh… i-it’s nothing…”

Richie crossed his arms, watching amused as Jane seemed intent on finding an answer, “Is it, sex?” She asked.

“Yes… I mean… no… its… don’t worry about it ok? It’s nothing.” Mike smiled at her reassuringly.

“Should I spank you?” Jane asked looking at him seriously.

“No! No! Absolutely not!” Mike shook his head as Richie laughed loudly, “Don’t worry about it, ok?”

“Should you… spank me?” Jane questioned looking at him curiously.

“Yes.” Richie smirked broadly.

“No!” Mike shouted shaking his head vigorously.

“Jane? You want me to teach you about spankings?” Richie flicked his brows.

Jane nodded innocently, making Mike huff and grab her arm to lead her away from the deck. Richie laughed, cupping his hands to his

mouth as they walked off, “Any time you want me to teach you, Jane, just lean over the table in the dining room and I’ll teach you good!”

“Shut up, Richie!” Mike shouted at him.

Richie chuckled as Will stood quietly next to him, “Was I… that loud?”

Wrapping an arm around Will, Richie smiled, “Apparently so, my love. I don’t mind, I love those sounds you make.”

Will pressed his face in Richie’s shoulder, “I’m so embarrassed…”

“It’ll be fine. Just come with me, we’ll get some breakfast. They’re going to tease us whether we like it or not” Richie smiled leading him to the dining room.

Dustin placed a straw pillow on the chair Will usually sat on, “Something for your sore ass, milord.” He bowed as Lucas and Steve both started to laugh from their spots at the table.

Nancy smacked Steve’s arm, “Oh stop. They’re just having fun.”

Will sighed, chucking the pillow at Dustin’s head before sitting down. Dustin laughed, catching the pillow. “Don’t be embarrassed, at least you’re getting some… unlike Dustin here.” Max said sitting between Lucas and Dustin at the table.

“Hey! I can totally get some.” Dustin rolled his eyes like she was nuts.

“Oh yeah? Who on this ship would even touch you?” Max raised a brow.

“Like everyone, if I let them.” Dustin scoffed, “I’m a catch, even if you don’t see it.”

Max rolled her eyes, “You wish.”

“For your information, Princess Greta was giving me the eye yesterday.” Dustin said a-matter-o-factly.

“First off, no she wasn’t, but secondly, you shouldn’t be bragging about that.” Lucas said shaking his head at Dustin.

Will giggled a bit, “She seems quite miserable, why would you even suggest she’s interested in you?”

“Look, it’s not like I was born with big muscles, a cute face, or… or perfect hair! I mean, I’ve got struggles going on here.” Dustin explained.

“Dustin, you’ll find a girl. You just need to be patient.” Nancy told him as she ate her eggs.

“Even hook-man over here has a girl, I’m just… not fortunate.” Dustin sighed as Georgie looked over from beside Holly.

“Just be yourself.” Georgie told him.

“Yeah, tried that…” Dustin grumbled, “I’ll see you guys later… I’m going to go fish.” Dustin headed off sadly.

Richie sighed watching him go, “Someone needs to get him laid and fast.” Richie then looked to Lucas.

“Me?! Why?” Lucas stared wide eyed.

“Come on, Lucas. Be a good friend. Share your girl.” Richie teased.

Lucas glared at him, “What?! No!”

“No way!” Max shouted.

Richie shot them a shit eating grin, “No? Just a little blowjob?”

“You’re gross!” Max threw bread at him.

Will giggled, “Your crew is going to poison you if you don’t stop.”

“That’s the plan, die a hero!” Richie winked, eating the bread she threw at him, “At least I got free bread out of this.” Will rolled his eyes still very amused.

Notes for the Chapter:

How did you like this chapter? Let me know!

22. Promises

Summary for the Chapter:

> Finally, the group sets sail for Valora Kingdom! Richie and Will discuss important details along the way.

Chapter 22

Sailing back to Grenada had taken several days. When they did finally get Greta back home, she showed very little appreciation for it. Richie walked her back into the castle with his crew. King Norbert Keene thanked Richie, “You’ve saved my daughter, I owe you a great debt. Thank you. I won’t be turning you over to your father.”

Richie nodded, “Thank you. Now, how about we discuss the new rules I intend to implement?” Richie said confidently as Will stood beside him.

“New Rules? What are these rules?” The king asked as Greta sat next to him in her mother’s throne looking less than impressed.

“I’m abolishing the slavery law. There will be no more laws passed without democracy, and votes from the people of the kingdom.” Richie started.

“No. Slavery stays. Also, why would I want peasants making decisions that affect me?” Greta shook her head.

“Richie saved your life, you’re lucky to be alive. The least you can do is listen to what he has to say.” Beverly reminded her with furrowed brows.

“Please,” Greta rolled her eyes, “If he didn’t save me, he’d have his father hunting him down right now. My dad’s already doing him a big favour, you stupid whore.”

Ben drew his sword, and Richie pressed a hand to Ben’s chest to stop him from doing anything irrational. Richie looked at Greta and then her father, “Well we’ve heard from your daughter, no what’s your

answer?"

The king looked a little torn, but looked at Richie, "No. We won't be changing anything about how this place is run. It's my kingdom, I get to decide." He said to Richie.

Richie nodded, "Enjoy it while it's yours. We'll be leaving now." Richie turned on a heel, leading his crew out of the castle."

The King stood up, "Wait." Richie stopped, turning to look at him, "What do you mean 'while it's mine'?"

"I exactly as I say. Kings who aren't strong enough to defy their insolent children are bound to fall." Richie said watching the King glare at him, "Good day." Richie said turning around again to leave.

Will followed Richie close by, "We're just leaving?"

"Yes. For now." Richie nodded to him, "Tonight, we're setting sail for Valora Kingdom. It's time to end this madness once and for all." Richie said in an unusually serious manner.

Will reached for Richie's hand. "Are we ready?" Will asked.

Richie nodded his head, "We're very ready." He held Will's hand as he walked towards the shore to get back to their ships.

All of the crew that stayed behind belonged on the other four ships at the docks. They stood around, waiting for Richie's orders the moment he came into view. "Everyone, we have to talk." Richie said watching everyone crowd around him.

"We're in the final stages of our fight for freedom. It hasn't been an easy road, but I know I have the best crew anyone could ever ask for." Richie started as he looked around at everyone, "Next location we sail to will be Valora Kingdom. They will greet us with hostility and try to kill us immediately. They will know why we're there, and they will try to kill every last one of us."

Looking around, Will watched everyone taking in Richie's words seriously. "There's only two things we have to remember though, the first being that we have the advantage. There are many of us, more

than the amount of men fighting for my father. Secondly, we're fighting for what we believe in, for what we all want and need. My father, he's fighting for greed. He's fighting for himself. We can't let one man with selfish needs rule the good people of Valora Kingdom. We have to save them from this horrible monster on the throne." Richie looked around at everyone as he spoke, knowing he had their undivided attention.

"Once we win, and we WILL win, we will have the power to change the world as we know it. We will make this world a much better place. All you have to do is fight for it. So are we going win this war?" Richie asked around, listening as everyone responded in cheer, "Good! Now let's set sail, tomorrow morning, we attack at dawn." Richie said before heading onto his ship.

Will was right on Richie's heels as he headed towards his cabin while the rigging crew got to work on getting the ship to sail. Georgie and Holly headed down to the kitchen at the same time. "Richie?" Will asked as they shut the door behind them.

Richie looked at him, "What's the matter? Are you alright?" Richie was acting a bit strange, talking so seriously and being so quiet.

Will could understand why Richie was being the way he was, but it still bothered him, "I'm alright. I just wondered if you were." Will looked at him seriously.

Richie looked down, "I guess its pretty obvious isn't it? I'm nervous…"

Wrapping his arms around Richie, Will hugged him close. Richie curled his arms around Will, holding him tightly. "I'm really not sure what will happen out there. I gave that big speech about how we can win, but… I'm really not sure…" Richie confided in Will, whispering so no one else could possibly hear him.

Will cupped his face, "You were right about everything you said out there, you know that, don't you? We are fighting to save the world as it is now. We can change the bad, and make it good. We've been through so much already, I don't see how this will be what stops us." Will told him seriously, "I already thought I was going to lose you

once, back at Tormund Kingdom, when Henry Bowers took you captive. I refuse to believe that I'm going to lose you here."

Richie kissed the top of Will's head, "If anything did happen to me… do you promise to go back to Pavlovia with your family?"

Will looked up at him, "That's not going to happen, so I don't have to worry about that." Will told him seriously.

"Will, you don't know my father…" Richie tried to tell him seriously.

"You're right I don't. Still, I do know you. Nothing is going to stop you. All these men and women following you, are here because they love you. They love what you stand for, Richie. They'll never let you down, they'd die first. You've done incredible things already, things I never thought were possible. You're going to win, there's not a single doubt in my mind." Will assured him.

Richie looked at Will for a long moment, "You're amazing, Will. You really are." Richie cupped his face in both hands, kissing Will gently on the lips.

"You're amazing, Richie. I owe my life to you." Will told him seriously, "If you hadn't saved me, I wouldn't be anything more than a slave. I would never have known what living really was."

Richie looked at him gently before letting go of Will. "I was going to save this for another time, but… I think this has to be now…"

The blonde was confused as he watched Richie dig around in his bed side drawer. "You deserve a life. You deserve the best life." Richie said before coming back over to Will, taking Will's left hand into his, "When this is all over, when we have peace," Richie knelt down on one knee staring up at Will, "I want you to be mine… forever. Would you marry me, Will?" Richie said slipping a ring onto Will's ring finger.

Will looked down at the ring resting on his ring finger. It was a large ruby stone encased inside of a gold band. It was beautiful, and it made Will's heart do flips. Will smiled at him, looking Richie in the eyes, "I could look forward to forever so long as it's with you. Yes, I'll

definitely marry you." Will kissed him again, the two kissing deeply.

Richie didn't want to let go of Will, he wanted to keep kissing him forever. His long slender fingers wrapped through the blonde locks before him as their tongues mingled together. Will's eyes leaked tears of happiness and Richie felt them on his thumbs as he held Will's face. Pulling back, Richie looked into Will's soft eyes, "Are you ok?" Richie questioned.

Will nodded smiling through the tears, "I'm so happy, Richie. I love you so much."

Richie smiled back at him, pressing their lips together. "Come on, let's go wait in the dining hall, and announce our engagement." Richie smiled, taking Will's hand, leading him to the dining hall.

Will and Richie were all smiles as they sat beside each other at their usual spot. They were the first ones there, so they spent the time together kissing. "Mm…" Will cupped Richie's face, kissing him deeply, "After dinner… can we just be alone?" Will hinted.

Richie grinned, "Of course. Fucking you is definitely on my mind."

Will giggled, kissing him softly as the crew piled in one by one together. "Get a room." Dustin joked as he spotted them kissing.

"How dare you speak to my future husband like that." Richie smirked as he held Will close.

"You two are engaged?" Ben looked at them surprised.

"Finally." Beverly smiled as she sat down across from Will, bringing his hand closer to see the ring, "Oh, it's so pretty! Nice work on the ring, Richie."

"Here I thought we might be able to go a night without listening to them fucking." Stan chimed in as he sat in his usual place at the table.

"We hear you and Hanlon nearly every night, so are you sure you wanna talk?" Richie smirked.

Stan said nothing, avoiding eye contact as Mike simply grinned next to him. Georgie came in with the food, Holly in tow with the rest of it. The table was set, and everyone began eating, talking about Richie and Will's engagement excitedly.

"So where should the ceremony take place?" Beverly asked excitedly, "Can I plan your outfits?"

"Calm down, they just got engaged." Max laughed at Beverly's eagerness.

"Of course you can Miss Marsh, I wouldn't have it any other way." Richie winked at her, "As for where… I'm thinking Valora Kingdom? I mean, it IS my home kingdom."

"We would have to send for my family in Pavlovia though." Will reminded.

"Definitely. I wouldn't want you to marry me without your parents to witness it." Richie said as he ate a crab cake with a smile.

The group pretty well had the entire wedding planned out by the time dinner was over. Everyone offered for Richie and Will to come drink with them, but the two declined, Richie picking up Will from his seat, carrying him off to their room. "If you hear any loud lovemaking… sorry, not sorry!" Richie laughed as he entered his cabin, Will kicking the door closed behind them as they kissed passionately.

Richie laid Will on their bed, hovering over him as Will worked Richie out of his clothing as fast as he could. "Hey, you can slow down you know? We've got all night." Richie laughed.

"I know, but I want you so bad right now…" Will said as he removed the shirt from Richie's body.

Richie smirked, pulling off Will's pants as Will struggled his way out of his shirt. Once the two of them were entirely naked, Richie leaned over Will again, kissing his lips, all the way down to his neck, eliciting soft moan from Will. Both of their pelvis's rubbed together, Richie providing much of the friction as Will gasped and moaned

with delight. “Oh Richie… you feel so good…”

Richie removed his mouth from Will’s neck, a hickey left behind as he looked Will in the eye, “I love you so much, Will.” Richie smiled warmly at him, “Never forget that, even if…” Richie swallowed, his eyes brimming with emotion.

Will cupped his face, “Shh…” Will shook his head, “You’re going to live a long life. We’re going to have the best marriage possible.” Will ingrained into his brain.

Richie pressed their lips together, his one hand deftly searching for the bottle of oil that sat on his dresser. Once he grabbed it, he pulled back, lubricating his fingers. Richie pulled Will’s legs over his shoulders before reaching down to circle Will’s opening with a lubricated finger. Inserting a single digit, he pumped in and out a few times before inserting a second digit. Will swallowed, gripping the bedding, “I’m ready, just put it in me.” Will said eagerly.

Richie laughed, “You’re impatient… maybe I should make you wait for it…” Richie probed deeper, pressing into Will’s prostate roughly.

Will fidgeted, “Hey!” Will went wide eyed, “Please put it in? I want to feel you inside of me.” Will begged, his eyes looking at Richie pleadingly.

Richie ignored Will’s begging, leaning down to wrap his mouth around Will’s hard erection. “Oh! Richie!” Will moaned loudly, his knees squeezing around Richie’s shoulders as he felt Richie’s fingers still probing at his prostate.

Richie’s plush lips pushed all the way down to the base of Will’s cock before slowly moving towards the head as his wild tongue licked vigorously at the underside of his erection making Will squirm. “Oh God! Yes! Yes! More!” Will begged gripping the bedding with his fists.

Moving his head a little faster, Richie suddenly popped off Will’s erection, removing his fingers just as Will was getting built up. “Oh! Please don’t tease…” Will begged, making Richie pleased at how desperate he sounded.

Richie chuckled, moving forwards so his pelvis was lined up with Will's. Pressing the head of his erection into Will's opening. "Oh!" Will wrapped his legs around Richie's waist, hugging him close.

"That's it… you love this big cock don't you?" Richie grinned, rolling his hips repeatedly as he slammed into Will's prostate.

"Yes!" Will responded, making pleased sounds below him as Richie held onto Will's thighs.

Richie bit his bottom lip, groaning deeply as he thrust in and out of the tight opening that seemed to clench him with each thrust, "Fuck…." Richie panted as he picked up speed.

"Oh yes! I'm going to come! Oh!" Will cried out as they moved together.

Richie stopped his motions suddenly, making Will glare at him, "Why did you stop!?"

A shit eating grin spread across Richie's face, "Beg for it." Will stared at him mortified before rolling his hips once, "Come on, baby… tell me how bad you want it."

"Richie!" Will whined cutely.

Richie rolled his hips again, eliciting another desperate moan, "Come on… tell your captain how much you love it."

Will moaned, wreathing under him, "I love it… please don't stop, captain." Will's beautiful eyes depicted his desperation.

Richie bit his lip, moving his hips at a moderate pace for Will's body to begin building back up again. "Thank you! Oh yes!" Will arched his back, his insides gripping around Richie, milking him with each deep thrust he made into Will.

"Fucking Hell, you're tight… Oh shit… oh fuck…" Richie willed himself not to come as he gripped Will's legs, thrusting hard into Will's prostate.

"Richie! Richie! Yes!" Will screamed before releasing hard, much

louder than normal.

Richie bit his lip, releasing deep into Will. “Fuck… Will you feel so fucking good…” Richie leaned down, locking lips with Will, their tongues mingling desperately as they tried to catch their breath while they kissed.

Will rubbed Richie’s back, encouraging him to stay inside of him as Richie rested on top of Will. “I wish I could have known you sooner…” Will sighed sadly.

“You’re sad?” Richie asked a bit confused, “You just came, how can you be sad?” Richie was genuinely confused about everything.

“I’m not sad about you… I’m sad because… of all these stupid memories that I have for no good reason.” Will looked a bit far away as he stared at the ceiling.

Richie propped himself up on his elbows and cupped Will’s head in both hands, “I wish I hadn’t had so much time stolen from me… I wish Zachary hadn’t been stolen from you… there’s just so many bad things that happened…” Will’s eyes began to leak, “I just… I’ve been trying to so hard to be normal… am I really right for you? Can you truly be happy marrying a man who was raised to be a slave? I feel so worthless so often…”

Richie kissed him to silence him before he pulled back looking into Will’s eyes, “You’re the best thing that’s ever happened to me. I don’t care what you were, but I wish you could see how important you are.” Richie told him sadly, “You’re perfect, Will. You’re everything I could have ever wanted.”

Will kissed him, running his fingers through Richie’s hair. Pulling out of Will, Richie let himself lie beside Will, pulling him close, “If you could have been anything… then who would you have wanted to have been instead before I met you?” Richie asked, kissing his neck gently.

Rolling his eyes Will shook his head, “I don’t know… you’re a prince… maybe I’d want to be that or… something better than a prince so I actually deserve you.” Will looked at him for a moment,

“Why do you ask me such strange things sometimes?” Will couldn’t help but smile.

“Because it’s fun.” Richie kissed his shoulder, “So… let’s pretend… you were born the future emperor of West Shire Island.” Richie said holding out a hand towards the ceiling, “Your mother and father, they sent you off abroad to study, to make you a smart young man, ready to lead all of the kingdoms in the world.” Richie smiled, listening to Will giggle a bit.

“Right… and you just, intercepted my ship back home, and kidnapped me like a pirate?” Will smiled a little.

“Of course I did… I had to make sure I got this fine booty.” Richie groped Will’s ass, kissing his lips gently as Will giggled, “But no, the reason I captured you….” Richie took a moment to think of a good story, “Hmm… oh I know. I had to get to you first, because you were going to pick one prince in the kingdom to marry, and I wanted it to be me, so I could rule the kingdoms by your side.” Richie smiled making Will laugh some more at his ridiculous story.

“Oh, of course.” Will giggled, “Prince Henry, and Prince Patrick were really what my heart desired, so you had to beat them to me.” Will nodded with a smile.

“Yes, exactly! I wasn’t about to lose my chance to rule the kingdoms. I had this brilliant plan to make you fall in love with me, and then marry you and rule the world, but… things got a little heated” Richie said, kissing his neck, making Will laugh some more, “I accidentally fell in love with you, for your kind heart, beautiful eyes, and the purity of your spirit.” Richie kissed Will’s cheek, “Now I’m at your mercy.”

Will wrapped both arms around Richie’s neck, pulling him close, “As the emperor, I claim you as my betrothed.” Will kissed his lips, “Now you do what I say for the rest of your life.” Will smiled winking at him.

“Yes master.” Richie smirked, kissing his lips lovingly.

“If only life were that simple.” Will sighed, “Thank you for that

though… I much prefer your version of events than the real story."

Richie kissed him again, "I love you, Will… forever and always."

"I love you too, Richie. After tomorrow, our new life begins." Will closed his eyes, both of them deciding it was high time to get some shut eye before dawn broke through.

Notes for the Chapter:

Hope you're ready for the end. It's looming closer!

23. Stand-Off

Summary for the Chapter:

> Richie and his crew make their final stance against his father in Valora Kingdom. Many surprises await.

Chapter 23

Valora Kingdom was in perfect view as dawn peaked over the mountains, greeting them with a golden sunrise. Richie sat with his crew at the breakfast table, looking around at all of them, “You are all my best friends, and family. I want you to know that. No matter what happens today, don’t give up. Always fight for what you believe in. So long as you fight with your heart and soul, you’re doing the right thing. Thank you for coming with me on this journey. It’s been a wild ride, but each and every single one of you made it worthwhile for me.” Richie looked at them warmly.

“Thank you for being the best captain, it makes a big difference.” Beverly said to Richie seriously.

Richie smiled at her, “Everyone… this is the end of the line. Let’s make this last step worth the journey it took to get us here.” Richie got up, everyone else following him as they headed onto the deck together.

Will followed close to Richie, standing on the deck with him as the guards seemed to be preparing for an attack as they spotted ‘The Raveness’ and four other ships. Archers were aiming their arrows at the ship, leading Richie to devise a quick plan.

Richie looked back at Jane, “Hey, do you think you can stop the archers from getting us?”

Jane nodded, stepping forward, Mike Wheeler at her side immediately. Jane held out her hand, concentrating hard as she watched the archers begin to use their bows. With her mind, she broke every single bow, the string dangling on each one. Each man looking confused and horrified at the same time.

When the ship was close enough, the crew began to run off the ship and onto the beach, Richie led the way, not looking back as he cut his way through the beach soldiers. Will shot several men before they could touch Richie, but didn't do so in the reckless way he had in Xanbar.

Eddie Kaspbrak dived between the legs of his oppressors, slashing with his sword at their legs. It was amazing to see someone using their short stature as such a deadly advantage. Georgie grabbed the swords of his enemies with his hook, disarming them easily before stabbing with his other hand. Holly hid behind a barrel, shooting out at those approaching. She managed to snipe several guards off before they could see her despite her light blonde locks shimmering in the sunlight.

Nancy was Steve's back up it seemed, shooting those that tried to attack Steve while he was already fighting someone else. Max and Lucas fought together, Max slashing at the men close to her while shooting those further away with her other hand. Lucas threw his daggers at on coming soldiers but used his sword well against those that were right before him. Until he could retrieve his daggers again as they made their way towards the kingdom to get to the castle.

Bill fought with one sword until he picked up a second. He was deadlier with two as he had very good coordination. He cut through several men who made their way for other members of the ship before spotting Eddie using his height to his advantage. "Get em, Eds!" Bill cheered excitedly before getting back to slicing and dicing his enemies.

Richie looked towards the castle once there was a clear view. More soldiers were marching out onto the battlefield. The crew was going to be exhausted, too exhausted if they had to beat them. "Jane! Can you get those soldiers before they get to us?!" Richie called over to her.

Jane spotted them, knowing there were a lot, and it would use much of her energy. Mike Wheeler defended her bravely as she closed her eyes on the battlefield before using her powers to lift herself up. Her short hair was billowing in the wind. She held up both of her hands before the wind began to blow around her. Opening her eyes, Richie

watched them turn red before she started to scream, sending the guards whirling around in the air before throwing them into the stone walls of the castle, effectively scaring and incapacitating several. Only a few dared stand up again, and head towards the beach.

Mike Wheeler caught her as she fell to the ground, nose bleeding, and weak. “Hey, are you ok?” Mike asked nervously as he pushed her short hair out of the way, looking into her eyes.

Jane looked at him, nodding with a pained expression. “I’m tired…”

Mike nodded, “Rest, I’ll keep you safe.” Mike gently laid her on the ground, grabbing his sword to keep defending her should anyone approach.

Looking around the beach, the crewmates from all five boats were surprised to see very little casualties on the beach of their side. “Everyone, keep your guard up. It’s time to get to the castle. Don’t be fooled by how easy this battle was, it’s going to get harder soon.” Richie pointed his sword in that direction.

Everyone followed Richie as he marched through the kingdom. Many of the civilians were hiding indoors. Some peaked out at them nervously, but eyes full of curiosity. Richie looked around as he walked, “People of Valora Kingdom! Don’t fear us! Remain inside for your safety! Soon this nightmare will be over!” Richie called out.

Heading towards the first gate outside of the castle, they spotted Jane’s handy-work as many of the guards had fallen unconscious or too injured to move. Mike Wheeler carried Jane past the bodies, the bard trio providing them with protection as they moved.

Richie spotted movement up ahead, but the moment he realized what he was looking at, he gripped his sword tightly, “Everyone, my father is showing his true nature to us… he’s using his alchemy… don’t fear it, just fight it. They will fall.” Richie warned everyone before they realized a group of skeletons with a green smokey haze surrounding them was making its way over to them, armed with swords and armour.

“Holy shit!” Dustin exclaimed with wide eyes.

“H-How the fuck do we beat skeletons!?” Eddie asked.

“Just swing!” Richie shouted before slashing at the first skeleton who attacked.

When the head was severed from the rest of the boney body, the skeleton crumbled before him, showing the others they were just as vulnerable as a human. Will didn’t bother using his gun for a skeleton as it didn’t make much sense. He swing his sword, chopping one down frantically before Bill Denbrough and Mike Hanlon cut through them easily as they made a wall with Richie.

Once the group of skeletons had perished, Richie looked back at them, “This is what my father is capable of, so don’t be surprise by anything you see from here on out, just understand, magic can be broken!”

More skeletons appeared before them, but it seemed as they moved towards the main doors, they were defeating them easily. It was what was standing in front of the main doors that seemed to concern them the most as a large decorative group of four fully armoured soldiers with bits of peeling skin were falling from their limbs indicating they were dead rotting corpses under the armor.

Eddie gagged along with Dustin as they could see some maggots burrowing into the flesh of their arms and legs that were exposed. Luckily, their faces were fully hidden behind the helmet armour. Stan inched closer to Mike Hanlon, nervous of what the four soldiers would do to them.

The soldiers moved closer, one swinging his sword at Beverly only for Ben to slash at his arm, severing it in half. Beverly dodged the slash, but watched in horror as maggots fell from the severed arm before her.

Richie grimaced, “Fuck this is disgusting…” Richie slashed at another one, the rest of the crew going after the four resurrected soldiers three at a time. Stan impaled the one in the face with his sword while Mike Hanlon cut off it’s head, soon after the soldier fell to the

ground.

“Why did he bother making these things if they’re so easy to beat?!” Bill asked as he and Georgie took another one down.

“He must have run out of live bodies, so he has to improvise!” Richie called over, finishing of the final soldier.

Will grimaced at the number of maggots on the ground at his feet. “This is disgusting…”

“Let’s get inside.” Richie nodded, opening the double doors.

On the way inside, the hallways were empty, not a single person in sight. “Let’s go to the throne room…” Richie told them as he headed inside deeper, keeping close watch for his father lurking.

The entire crew followed Richie’s lead, taking a turn right down the nearest hallway. Heading straight for the throne room, Richie opened the double doors, spotting his father sitting on the throne, a look of disdain on his face, “My own son… betraying me like this. It’s unthinkable.” Wentworth Tozier spoke with annoyance.

Richie leered at him, entering the throne room, “My own father, putting my mother in a catatonic state so he might rule on his own, murdering his sons lover just to control his son. Unthinkable.” Richie retorted as he stood several feet away from his father, “So… is this done? Do you surrender, or do you think you can take me in a fight?” Richie asked him confidently.

Wentworth looked at Richie confidently, “Just you and me then, a duel. No others may join the battle. If I win, you do as I command, this is assuming you live. Your friends leave with their lives, and I continue to rule my kingdom.” Wentworth gave his terms standing up, drawing his sword from his belt.

Richie looked at him, “I accept your terms. Just you and me, no alchemy, or I count that as disqualification. If you forfeit, I’ll ship you off to Stavros with no means of ever returning to this kingdom, that’s if you live.” Richie informed him darkly.

Wentworth stood before Richie, “I accept your terms.”

Will hated everything about the fact that he had to watch as Richie potentially sacrificed his life before the group. He wasn't allowed to interject and he knew it. Bill stood next to Will on one side, Ben on the other side of him as they watched their captain strike a dueling stance with his father. It wasn't something a father and a song should ever be doing, but Will was witnessing it at a heartbreaking closeness.

Everyone stared out at Richie as he made the first lash with his sword, his father blocking it. Being younger and more agile was on Richie's side, but Wentworth had experience from years prior. They took turns slashing and attempting to hit one another. Each sound of metal slamming into more metal sent a pang of worry into Will's chest. He felt something was wrong, Wentworth wouldn't go down so easily.

Richie dived out of the way of one of his father's attacks before rolling across the floor in an attempt to get away. He jumped back up to his feet, slashing his sword at his father, only for his father to grunt and block it, "You're a fool to take me, boy… you'll never win." Wentworth growled.

"At least I know I'm getting under your loose skin old man." Richie snapped back as he slashed at his father's neck, only to be blocked.

"You need to forget about that slave boy, he's long dead now. You can't turn back time." Wentworth said, "I can't believe you even fell for such trash."

Richie growled, slashing hard at his father only to swipe air, "You don't talk about him like that!"

Wentworth smirked, "You're too soft boy, just like your mother… she was more sad that she'd never get to hold you and tell you she loved you once I put her under the spell…"

Richie felt emotions filling his eyes, but he pushed them away, "You're a monster!" Richie dodged a swing, attempting to get Wentworth with a slash to the arm, but he missed once again.

"You're a disappointment. I guess we're even!" Wentworth growled

as he slammed his sword into Richie's only for Richie to retaliate.

Watching the sword fight go on before him was stressful enough for Will, but hearing the cruel words Wentworth spoke to Richie made it even worse. Richie was fighting hard against his father, seemingly doing everything he could not to get too distracted by what he was feeling.

"Maybe if you could just forget everything that happened in your past, you'd be much more compliant to my will…" Wentworth kicked one of Richie's feet, causing his son to land on his back on the ground in shock, "Perhaps I can help you with that…" Will saw Wentworth reach for something on his belt and that was all it took for Will to go running towards Richie with a fear burning in his chest.

"Will! No!" Bill shouted as Will dived in front of Richie just as the flask was thrown downwards.

The flask of yellow substance shattered against Will's back, causing it to envelope Will entirely in a vibrant yellow glow. The moment Will stopped glowing before Richie's eyes, he collapsed to the ground looking lifeless. Richie was boiling with rage, standing up immediately, running his father who was still in shock, through with his blade.

Blood spilled from Wentworth's mouth as Richie pulled the sword from his gut only to stab into him five more times before letting the body fall down, dead before him. Running to Will's side, Richie held Will close, "Will? Baby?" Richie looked at him, shaking him, "Wake up! Please wake up!" Richie screamed.

The crew approached, looking cautious. "Why isn't he waking?!" Richie's eyes were leaking tears as Eddie knelt beside him, checking Will's pulse.

"He's alive…" Eddie told him.

"Send for Mr. Clarke! Get him here!" Richie shouted, unable to celebrate his victory as he held onto Will, refusing to let him go. "Please wake up, Will! I need you…" Richie sobbed into his neck, unsure of what more to do for his fiancé.

“I’ll be ok. We’ll figure this out.” Mike Wheeler rubbed Richie’s back gently, hoping to ease his cousin’s mind.

***

When Will opened his eyes, it was late in the afternoon, the very same afternoon Mr. Clarke arrived in Valora Kingdom. Richie looked scruffy, tired, and worn out, but ecstatic at the same time. “Will! You’re awake! I missed you so much!” Richie wrapped both arms around Will, pressing his lips to Will’s only for the blonde to press on his shoulders, forcing him away.

“What? Who are you? Why am I here? Who…” Will looked down at himself, “Who am I?”

Richie paused, a hurt look crossing his face. “You don’t… remember?”

Will shook his head looking around Richie’s bedroom. Mr. Clarke placed a hand on Richie’s shoulder, “This is a possible side affect of the potion Will was subjected to. It’s meant to make one docile.”

“Will someone please tell me what’s going on?” Will asked sounding scared.

Richie looked to him gently, “I… You’re the emperor.” Richie said seriously, wanting him to believe this was true.

Will looked at him, eyes wide, “I am? Oh…” Will looked around the room, “Does that mean… you’re my…?” Will questioned Richie as he looked down at the ruby ring around his ring finger.

“Fiance? Yes.” Richie nodded at him, looking at him a little less sadly, “I’m sorry you don’t remember me… you were attacked, and a potion that hit you must have done this to you.” Richie explained.

Will thought back, “I really wish I could remember.”

Richie reached for him, but quickly pulled his hand back, not wanting to make him uncomfortable. “I’m the prince of Valora. I met you at sea. You were on your way to Valora and I thought you were beautiful the first moment I saw you. It took me a while to tell you

how I really felt, but you were the one who said it first." Richie smiled gently at him.

Will listened, "My name's Will?"

"William Byers. You were the emperor of West Shire Island." Richie lied again.

Will grabbed his head, clenching his eyes closed, "I don't remember any of it."

Mr. Clarke looked to Richie, "I'm not entirely certain his memory will ever recover, I'm very sorry about all of this."

Richie looked to Mr. Clarke, "It's alright. He's alive, that's what matters…"

"He's just, likely not the same person you remember…" Mr. Clarke pointed out.

"It'll be fine. He'll just have to learn all over again…" Richie sighed a bit closing his eyes.

Will laid back in bed, "I'm tired… can I sleep?"

"Of course, you can." Richie gently pulled the covers back over him.

Mr. Clarke and Richie headed into the hallway, a bitter sweetness washing over Richie as they walked together, "Thank you for coming so quickly. I appreciate everything you've done for us." Richie told him.

Mr. Clarke nodded his head, "You've done much for me too, Richie. I owe you. From here on out, the kingdoms will be united, and a new order will be passed in your name." Richie nodded a bit, but the two continued to walk as Mr. Clarke continued on, "I'm going to make him something else. Get him to drink a vial of it a day. If his memory returns, then we'll know the potion works. If not… then I guess you will have to make him fall in love with you again." Mr. Clarke looked at him gently.

Richie smiled weakly at that, "Maybe… Do what you can. I'll pay you

well for it."

"Of course not, I couldn't accept it. I want to help." Mr. Clarke patted his arm, "Go spend time with your crew, I'll be in the study working on the potion for Will's mind."

Richie appreciated what Mr. Clarke was doing for them. Richie watched him go before heading down to the throne room to meet up with his crew. He was at least happy to deliver the good news of Will's awakening.

Notes for the Chapter:

> Let me know if you're still enjoying this! The ending will come soon!

24. Epilogue

Summary for the Chapter:

> This is the conclusion of my 24 chapter Ryers fic. I hope you all have enjoyed reading it!

Epilogue

Mike Wheeler was nervous to become the King of Valora Kingdom. He wasn't sure he was ready for it, but Richie knew Mike was the best possible choice for King. The people greeted him warmly, even opening their hearts to Jane whom he had married exactly a month after the battle of Valora was over in a rather large ceremony. Richie soon learned this had much to do with the pregnancy Mike and Jane were hiding from everyone, but most of all it was because neither Mike nor Jane had ever felt closer to anyone in their lives than to each other. It was true love, Richie knew that much to be certain.

Within a month of Richie getting Mike Wheeler ready to become the King of Valora Kingdom, Jane his Queen, Richie had taken the recently engaged Beverly and Ben to Grenada Kingdom, removing the Keene family from the castle, and stripping them of their status. Greta Keene spent much of the eviction screaming about how much Richie was going to pay for what he was doing, but the moment they were put on the ship for Mikos Island, Richie was relieved to crown Ben the new King of Grenada Kingdom. Beverly and Ben married within the month, Beverly becoming one of the most influential Queens in all of Grenada's history.

Eventually, Steve brought Dustin, Lucas and Max with him to Tormund Kingdom where a large clean up had been done on the castle. Nancy Wheeler and Steve Harrington married in a small ceremony a day before the coronation to become King and Queen of Tormund Kingdom. Steve was shocked to find himself promoted from street urchin to King of a country. He agreed that Nancy should make many of the rules as she knew more about being royalty than he did.

Dustin and Lucas parted ways as Lucas insisted on staying at sea for a little while longer, Dustin wishing to settle down on land for a bit.

Things began looking up in Tormund Kingdom, especially for Dustin who found himself lucky enough to meet a rather beautiful girl in the kingdom who found him both adorable, and funny. Steve was proud, to say the least.

Once everything seemed to be in order, Richie got his remaining crew back together, arranging for a sail back to Pavlovia to deliver the message that the war had been won. Georgie and Holly remained the devoted kitchen staff while Stan took a shot at steering the boat while Mike Hanlon took over the role of back up rigger with Lucas, Bill Denbrough, of course, taking the lead. Max remained a gunner, helping with the rigging when necessary. A few new faces from his old army were aboard the ship, filling in the roles that were in need of being taken such as carpenter.

As for Will Byers, his memory didn't seem to get better after the last potion Mr. Clarke had made for him was taken. Nothing had changed it seemed, but Richie was holding onto hope, not willing to give up on Will despite the memory loss.

Richie managed to convince everyone he knew to address Will as if he were the emperor. Everyone agreed, preferring to keep the sweet lie going for him. Will had taken over the captain's quarters for the most part. Richie still slept beside him, but he refrained from cuddling or holding Will despite his urges for intimacy. Richie woke up before Will every morning, heading below deck to give Will some time to himself before facing each day.

The idea of meeting his mother intrigued Will, he wondered what she would be like. They were nearly a day away when Will woke up alone, his eyes spotting a gold rope lying on the ground next to the bed. Reaching down curiously, Will picked up the object, realizing it was a bundle of blonde hair. That was when everything hit him like a ton of bricks.

"My hair… from… the haircut… Beverly… she… oh my God… I remember…" Will gripped his head as every memory from the day he was saved on the slave ship to the moment he jumped in front of the yellow potion invaded his brain. "Ah!" He cried out as a sharp pain struck him through the temple.

Richie was in the cabin in moments, “Will? Are you ok?” Richie asked, eyes widened as he spotted Will holding his old ponytail.

“Oh… you found your hair?” Richie asked.

Will smiled, “Yeah… I did…” He couldn’t help but think the lie Richie told him was sweet.

“Are you ok?” Richie asked, “You sounded hurt…”

“No… I’m ok. I just had some head pain.” Will said standing up, approaching Richie with a smile that seemed to confuse Richie.

“What’s going on?” Richie asked as Will stood before him.

“I just had the most amazing dream.” Will smiled sweetly, “I was on this slaver ship locked up in this tiny little cage… and a handsome pirate saved my life.” Will wrapped his arms around Richie’s shoulders, watching the raven haired captain go wide eyed, emotions filling his eyes, “But… that must just be a dream… because I’m an emperor, not a slave boy from Pavlovia…” Will leaned up pressing his lips to Richie’s gently.

Richie wrapped his arms around Will’s middle, kissing him deeply as his hands trailed up Will’s back slowly, “Mmm…” Richie cupped Will’s face, a big smile on his face, “You remember? You remember everything?” Richie asked hopeful.

“I remember from the day you saved me, up until the day I saved you from getting hit with that potion. I don’t really remember anything before the day we met.” Will said honestly, “Something tells me it’s for the best.”

Richie smiled, looking at him softly, “Oh thank fuck… I thought I had lost you forever… the real you.”

Will nipped Richie’s lower lip, “How dare you make everyone address me as ‘emperor’ when you knew damn well I wasn’t an emperor.” Will scolded.

“Well, if you want to spank me, emperor, I wouldn’t stop you.” Richie grinned.

Will giggled cutely, “I love you, Richie. Thank you for taking care of me while I was lost… it means a lot to me.”

Richie kissed his lips gently, “I love you too, Will. So, so much.”

They embraced, just holding each other for a few moments before Will broke the silence, “When we get to Pavlovia… can we finally get married?”

Richie smiled, “Of course. The honeymoon starts immediately after that right? I can just fuck you all over every surface on Pavlovia?” Richie winked.

Will smiled, “You can try…”

“An invitation I’ll gladly accept.” Richie picked Will up, “Let’s go darling, the crew needs to know you’re back!”

Will wrapped both arms around Richie’s shoulders as Richie carried him bridal style up to the deck of the ship. “Everyone! Listen up!” Richie called out loudly.

Will pressed his face into Richie’s neck, a little embarrassed to have so many eyes on him in the early morning. “What is it?” Stanley asked curiously, worried something was wrong with Will.

“Your emperor has now regained much of his memory! He’s back to his old self, and requests everyone still refer to him as the emperor!” Richie announced.

“No! No one has to call me that!” Will shouted shaking his head at them all.

“What ever you say, emperor.” Bill Denbrough smirked as he wrapped an arm around Eddie’s shoulders with amusement.

Eddie smiled brightly at Will, happy to see him back to normal, “Welcome back, Emperor!”

Will blushed darkly, “Richie, you’re an asshole for getting this started.”

Richie chuckled, “Speaking of that… we should go back down to the cabin to get reacquainted…”

Will giggled, “You would say that.”

“Everyone! Plug your ears! It’s about to get loud downstairs.” Richie winked, carrying Will off to the lower part of the ship.

Will smacked his arm lightly as the crew rolled their eyes at him. “You know… you shouldn’t have jumped in front of that flask… you didn’t know what was in it.” Richie said to him as the entered the cabin, Richie kicking the door closed behind him.

Cupping Richie’s face, Will kissed him, “I love you too much to let anything happen to you.”

Richie kissed him, “Well, you gave me quite a scare, so as punishment, you’re getting another spanking.”

Will was leaned over the side of the bed as Richie undid his pants, pulling them off before a light slap to his ass sounded loudly in the room. “Richie!” Will gasped, smiling back at him, “That was nothing… try harder…” Will bent over further, receiving another three smacks before Richie couldn’t contain himself any longer, grabbing the oil from the nightstand.

Feeling oil slicked fingers at his back entrance, Will bit his lower lip, his body slowly accepting the invaders as they pressed deeply inside. “Oh!” Will moaned out as Richie pressed into his prostate.

“Fuck… you’re so much tighter after weeks of no sex…” Richie said scissoring his fingers.

Will moaned softly, “Put it in… I want it in me.” Will brought his knees onto the bed, still hunching over so Richie could fuck him rather easily.

Sliding carefully into Will, the blonde groaned softly before Richie grabbed both of Will’s shoulders, his hips rocking fluidly, “Mm…. I’m the luckiest man on Earth.” Richie smiled, pressing kisses to Will’s back.

“I beg to differ…” Will spoke softly before his back arched more, “Oh yes… Richie!”

Richie thrust hard in and out of him, “Will… I love you so fucking much…” Richie moaned, his teeth biting gently into Will’s shoulder, sending tingles through him.

Will panted heavily, his body working up rather quickly, “Oh God! I love you, Richie!”

The rutting of their hips was rather loud, echoing off the cabin walls. Richie took the opportunity to tug on Will’s hair, enjoying the whimpering moans that came from Will over it. “Oh my God! I’m going to come soon!” Will cried out, his fingers digging into the blankets below him.

Richie leaned back a bit, gripping Will’s hips as he began moving much faster, encouraging them both to come. “Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!” Richie cried out before coming hard into Will as Will released simultaneously with a moan.

Richie groaned, sliding out before he moved Will so he was on his side on the bed. Spooning into Will, Richie kissed his shoulder and neck. “Welcome back, baby…”

Will smiled, closing his eyes as he held Richie’s arms around him, “It’s good to be the emperor…”

Richie couldn’t help but chuckle, “You know… that’s technically me right now… you’re just my beautiful co-emperor…” Richie informed Will with a grin.

Will kissed his arms with his soft lips, “I can take that… just promise me one thing…” Will rolled over facing him.

“What’s that?” Richie asked curiously.

Will kissed his lips, “We’ll make the world as beautiful as we can together.”

Richie smiled warmly at him, “I promise. We’ll make it paradise… just you and me.” Richie smiled kissing his forehead.

Paradise. Will believed him. Richie always meant what he said. Closing his eyes again, he pressed his forehead to Richie's, eager to see what their future together would hold.

Notes for the Chapter:

I sincerely hope you enjoyed the ending. Please let me know what you thought of it! I love you all!

Author's Note:

Please leave your reviews with me, it feeds my soul!